



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

### Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

### About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>

WIDENER



HN P3TS \$

86 C

21425.14.9



## Harvard College Library

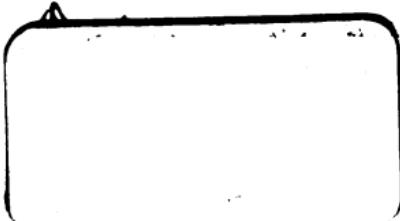
FROM THE

## GEORGE B. SOHIER PRIZE FUND

The surplus annual balance "shall be expended for books for the library."

— *Letter of Waldo Higginson,*  
Jan. 10, 1893.

Received



Digitized by Google







## THE ELECTION.



# THE ELECTION

## A TALE OF IRISH LIFE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

“RECOLLECTIONS OF HYACINTH O’GARA,”  
“CONFESSIONS OF HONOR DELANY,” ETC.

DUBLIN:

WILLIAM ROBERTSON, 35 LR. SACKVILLE-STREET.

HAMILTON, ADAMS AND CO. LONDON.

MDCCCXLVIII.

2425.1x.9



Sohier fund

✓ Frank Stanley  
✓ Dublin - 1848

## THE ELECTION.



# THE ELECTION.

## CHAPTER I.

OUR readers are requested to picture to themselves, a tolerably spacious drawing room, in a large, many-windowed, old-fashioned, aristocratic-looking mansion, furnished with all the fixtures and moveables, usually found in such localities. Of these articles, we shall specify but two, as worthy of regard on the present occasion, viz. a sofa, and a well-stuffed easy chair, on castors, placed directly opposite to each other—the distance between them being nearly filled up by a table well furnished with gaily bound books, and writing materials.

On the sofa sat a lady of that unguessable time of life, so happily and appropriately termed “a certain age.” Her bearing evidently belonged to a woman of rank and fashion; but there was an undefinable something in her attitude and man-

ner, as she addressed the chair that almost bordered on awkwardness—not, let it be carefully remembered, any vulgar gaucherie, but merely the absence of perfect ease—very like that kind of constraint which most people are conscious of, while sitting for their picture, and which increases in exact proportion, with the anxiety to look their very best.

The chair was occupied by an elderly, or, rather an old gentleman, with a remarkably honest, open countenance, and the air of a person of some consideration in society. But neither was his deportment perfectly natural. There was an evident effort at being something he was not, which produced a considerable degree of embarrassment, similar to that under which the lady suffered. Their aims, however, were very opposite. Lady Clanerris wished to appear familiar, playful, and confidential, whereas, Mr. Prior intended to be a condensation of formality, dignity, and impenetrability.

We shall take up their conversation at the point where it became most interesting, giving precedence, as we are in duty bound to the lady.

“I fear,” she said, “that in your opinion, we have but little chance of success.”

“None, whatever,” he answered, “unless Lord Clanerris’s Popish tenants can be persuaded not to register. If they have votes, they must give them as the priests direct; and you may be tolerably certain, that these gentlemen will not support Captain Bindon.”

“I had hoped,” said her Ladyship, with a sigh, “that the party terms, Popish and Protestant, would have been forgotten on the passing of the relief bill. Lord Clanerris was always most sanguine, that such would have been the immediate result of that measure.”

“So I have often heard him say,” replied her visiter.

“I must confess,” continued the Viscountess, with another sigh, “that the Catholics have disappointed us. They have not treated us as we deserved. We were for many years, very strenuous supporters of their claims.”

Mr. Prior remained silent; and after a short pause, she resumed the subject.

“It could not be expected that my son should pledge himself to advocate the repeal of the union—a measure, which I am sure, you will agree with me, would be ruinous to the country.”

“Yes,” he said, “and a very foolish, round-about way, when the present measures are doing

the work as quickly and as surely as the radicals can desire. But, assure yourself, Madam, Captain Bindon would not have been the popular candidate, had he swallowed the bait, and volunteered the pledge. The favourite system is to humble the aristocracy, and to root out Protestantism; now, he is the son of a nobleman, and goes to church, I believe, sometimes; and therefore unfitted to represent this county in a reformed parliament."

"I cannot quite understand the force of your argument," said Lady Clanerris. "Sir Andrew Shrivel seems to be very popular—in your opinion, sure of his seat—yet he is of a respectable Protestant family, and with a certain rank that places him decidedly among the aristocracy."

"Your Ladyship will remember, that Sir Andrew Shrivel possesses some redeeming qualities to counterbalance these imperfections. He cordially hates the Established Church, because it makes a demand upon his pocket; and he has proved the sincerity of his enmity by every exertion towards the starvation of his parish minister—a very powerful argument in his favour with the great body of the electors. Then, although he does write himself Knight and Baronet, yet, he is not a man of real consequence.

He is a poor-spirited, money-making, money-loving creature, who would sell his Baronetcy to-morrow, for the money it cost his father, if any one would buy it. He is neither loved nor feared by the priests; but it looks liberal, just at this time, to return one member, nominally Protestant, otherwise he would have fared as badly as Captain Bindon is likely to do."

"Has a fourth candidate been yet declared?" she asked.

"No. Two or three liberals have already declined the honour of representing us, though the priests have offered to return both members free of expense. But your Ladyship need not entertain hopes that the contest will be between Sir Andrew Shrivel and Mr. Ambrosse. An opponent to Captain Bindon will be found, even if it were in the person of Dixie Gregan, your game-keeper's son. By the bye, a very promising, oratorizing, paragraph-inditing young gentleman, who has already distinguished himself, in the politics of the county."

"This has been a very unexpected occurrence," said Lady Clanerris, after a moment's silence. "Indeed, I may call it unfortunate. If Edward loses his seat, I fear he will not remain in England. Nothing but parliamentary

duties, for which, he had always a particular fancy, prevented him long since from living entirely on the Continent—an event, which would be a source of most serious concern both to his father and myself. I feel no hesitation," she added, "in speaking thus confidentially to you—so near a relation of Lord Clanerris's, and one, for whose judgment he has so high a respect."

"Your Ladyship's confidence shall not be betrayed," said Mr. Prior, bowing low. "I wish my judgment, which I imagine overrated by Lord Clanerris, could be available to your interest on the present occasion; but I fear, even wiser heads than mine, would fail of contriving means to shut the sluices which Lord Clanerris's own hands have assisted to open."

"Can nothing be done?" she asked. "We have six weeks before us yet, and if we were all to work hard, success might yet be insured. Give *me* something to do—I know nothing of electioneering, but I could learn under good instruction. Ladies have often been most useful assistants on like occasions. Lord Clanerris tells me that his mother's exertions carried the county two or three times against the most violent opposition."

"It was his grandmother—my aunt," he re-

plied—"the proudest woman in Ireland, yet, most popular in her own county—and very deservedly so. With the *real* gentry of the country she lived in habits of friendly familiarity, treating them, in every respect, as her equals, except so far as her title gave her precedence. No individual, of whatever rank, he, or she might be, who came in contact with her, could feel their inferiority of situation, unless they deserved to be taught it: and then, the lesson was given with much better effect, than the sneaking, undignified conceit of the present day could possibly produce. After all, times are altered, as well as the manners of the great; and, perhaps, if my poor aunt had lived till now, she might have felt her influence fail before the united force of radicals and demagogues."

"I might try what effect a ball might have," said Lady Clanerris, determined on doing something. "A ball in the country is always a popular thing."

Mr. Prior shook his head.

"It will be but a shabby affair as to company," he said, "and very irksome to your daughters, who must be agreeable and unexclusive, otherwise, they will seal their brother's ruin at once. I can hardly conceive how you will fill one room

greatly doubt, he would if he could. He is a double-minded, or, rather a treble-minded, or more properly speaking, a no-minded man. Lady Macbeth's 'cat i' the adage.' He hates the priests, but he truckles to them, for he fears them. He will talk big one day, before his labourers, about the necessity of upholding the laws; and the next, he will wink at his agitating steward—the facsimile of your game-keeper, Mr. Gregan—heading a mob procession in defiance of them. He will, most probably, give you his solitary vote, and regret to you the intractability of his tenants; while, with the Popish faction, he will make a flourish of his non-interference, and wish that every poor man should be left to the dictates of his own conscience—in plain English—the *dictum* of the priests."

Lady Clanerris thought she saw a bull; but she stood on too slippery ground with her caustic cousin to venture on taking it by the horns; she therefore swallowed his plain English, without the slightest movement of the risible muscles, and demurely inquired what they had to expect from Sir Manby Rutherford.

"Leave that young coxcomb to me," he said. "I think I can manage him this time. Here-

after he may give trouble, for he sets up for being an original thinker, and is prepared to be a great man some of these days."

She took a paper from her writing case.

"Lord Clanerris," she said, "wishes me to call upon a few persons who have never left their cards here. He thinks they would take it as a compliment. Mr. Fogarth has supplied him with a list, which, I will thank you to look over, and tell me, if they are of that description that we could ask to dinner once a year, or so."

"Well! well!!" exclaimed the old gentleman, more, we are unwillingly obliged to tell, in anger than in sorrow. "The world must certainly be wheeling round the wrong way, or people's heads would not be turned as they are! What, in the name of common sense, could tempt your Ladyship to engage this pert, vulgar, forward, impudent, roguish upstart of an attorney—Mr. Sylvester Fogarth—as your master of ceremonies?"

"He has no office in my households," said her Ladyship with a smile. "Lord Clanerris employed him on the recommendation of Colonel Witherspoon as a useful agent, at this time; and he suggested the idea of something of this kind, as tending to strengthen Edward's interest."

“He suggest, indeed!” muttered Mr. Prior. “He will strengthen his own interest, I can tell you. But, let us see his suggestions. The Dodds of Cogglebracken—the Heevys of Heevy-brook—the Gandys of Gandyville—Mrs. Candalmas!—Madam! Madam!” he exclaimed angrily, “the fellow is laughing at you. These people are so completely out of your line, that they never could expect to be on visiting terms with you, till all ranks of society are melted down into one harmonious, democratical lump. Certainly, some of your own order seem to congratulate themselves on such a prospect; but, I rather suspect that you are of a different opinion; therefore, keep up your dignity as long as you can; and if it must die a violent death at last, which, I much fear, will be the case, take, at least immortal Cæsar for your example, and die with decency.”

Lady Clanerris looked very thoughtful, but did not answer, and Mr. Prior continued,

“That clannish feeling, Madam, which you ascribe to Lord Clanerris, I possess, to perhaps a foolish extent. I never could divest myself of an odd kind of affection for the name of Bindon, even when smarting under, what I conceived, very unkind neglect on the part of the repre-

sentative of the family. You may, therefore, rely upon my good offices; but, I most earnestly recommend you not to permit this Fogarth's interference in your affairs, farther than as a law agent in this election business. He is a low fellow, who, even if he were honest, could not understand what is suitable to your situation. But he is not honest, and under the pretence of increasing your popularity, would degrade you in the eyes of the county. Leave these people where they are. Let Lord Clanerris give two or three dinners to the men, as his father and grandfather did before him, which they found quite sufficient for their popularity. Any extraordinary condescension on your part should be avoided; it would injure, instead of serving you, at present."

"In such a hopeless state, as you represent our affair to be, can any thing either serve or injure us?" asked Lady Clanerris.

"Captain Bindon will assuredly be thrown out on the next election," he replied; "for which you may thank yourselves. There is still, however, a large Protestant population in the county, though discouraged on this estate and one or two others. There is also a considerable remainder of Protestant feeling; and, if your

son acts consistently, and avoids offending his real friends, he will, I hope, have a large majority on another occasion when we shall be better prepared for a contest."

Lady Clanerris took up Mr. Fogarth's list.

"I may say to Lord Clanerris," she said, slightly looking over it, "that you do not recommend me to visit any of these people."

"Certainly not—for the reasons before stated to your Ladyship. Perhaps," he said, after considering a little, "there might be an exception in favour of one—the last name on the list. Yes, you might visit Miss Dickinson—She is a gentlewoman, who, three fourths of a century ago, was in the habit of attending at the annual entertainments, which the Lady Clanerris of the time, gave to all the great and little gentry of the neighbourhood. Civilities of that kind to her, will not, therefore, be out of place, and she will take them as a compliment. Besides, she has four votes, which may, by proper management, be secured for Captain Bindon; although she is third or fourth cousin to Sir Andrew Shrivel, and not a little proud of the relationship."

"Where does she live?" asked Lady Clanerris, taking out her tablets. "I shall have the pleasure of calling on her to-morrow."

"At the upper end of the little village of

Oranard. I must forewarn you not to be too much shocked at the outside appearance of the house, which is old, and somewhat out of order."

"No matter about the house," she answered, writing the direction, "it would be too ridiculous to be fastidious about appearances of any kind, at this time, when even one vote is of so much consequence."

"Poor Miss Fiddy Dickinson!" said Mr. Prior, laughing, or rather chuckling to himself. "Poor Miss Fiddy! Your tongue will not have a holiday for one month at least, after a carriage, with a coronet, is seen stopping at your door. The genealogies of the Bindons and Shrivils, with all the collateral branches, will be detailed with a minuteness and accuracy which will not slur over one or two little circumstances, inconvenient for some of us to remember. I have described her to your Ladyship as a gentlewoman, and she really is one by birth and good breeding; but, you are not to expect a very elegant person: and if either of your daughters should accompany you, they need not throw away any modern elegance upon her. She would not understand it—in fact, she might mistake it for rudeness. I think she would admire a little stiffness of carriage, a stately kind of curtsy,

and any thing approaching to what she thinks dignity—of which, after all, she is not a very indifferent judge—though she may offer you *crame* with strawberries, or beg *lave* to call for your *futman*. Above all things, I recommend you to take a small piece of her sweet cake; and, at least, put a glass of her very bad currant wine to your lips; and if you could venture so far as to eat a morsel of her collared eel, which, I vouch to be excellent, you will make a lodgment in her heart, from which, even Sir Andrew himself, will not easily rout you."

"Thank you for your obliging hints," said the lady, "I shall act upon them to the very letter. But, Mr. Prior, you are not going to say good morning? Lord Clanerris hoped that you would give us the very great pleasure of your company at dinner."

Mr. Prior excused himself, on the plea of business at the registry in the neighbouring market town; and immediately took leave, promising to be the bearer of many kind regards and complimentary messages to Mrs. Prior, and the Miss Priors, and Mr. James Prior, and Mr. Edwin Prior, and in short, to all the Priors.

## CHAPTER II.

AN election, particularly a contested one, is an evil whose demoralizing effects upon all ranks are incalculable. With respect to the lower orders the mischief is apparent at once. But they are not the only sufferers, and perhaps, in no case, so far as morality is concerned, the greatest. The dirty work in which they are engaged has soiled other hands before their co-operation is required ; and it is a melancholy consideration that the odious vices exhibited by our peasantry at such times—the brutal insensibility to character—the contempt for the obligation of an oath—if not absolutely called into existence, are incited to activity, are fostered and encouraged by the deeper and more systematic profligacy of men in the upper, not unfrequently in the highest class of society—men, too, who, by courtesy, are styled men of honour. It certainly must be confessed, in numerous instances, by the very equivocal courtesy of a brace of pistols.

c

The truth is, however harshly it may sound in “ears polite,” that before a man can enter heartily into the business, honor and honesty must, some how or other, be put to sleep: and the opiates generally administered have a natural tendency to weaken the moral constitution, so that it scarcely ever afterwards recovers its original health and vigour. There may be cases when the candidate is returned without any exertions of his own—where he takes no part in the proceedings, except the usual routine at the hustings; and we would not require from a person in such circumstances that he should tax his conscience with a minute examination into the means which others gratuitously make use of in his behalf, or hold him accountable for the actions of his self-constituted agents.

But instances of this kind are far from common. Conduct absolutely passive can seldom be expected; and it would be well worth the serious consideration of those men who are not ashamed to confess that they have the fear of God before their eyes, whether they can escape unharmed from so severe an ordeal—whether all the probable benefit that may accrue to society by their exertions in parliament be not more than counterbalanced by the means, posi-

tively evil—evil in their nature and consequences—which have, in general, procured their return.

It is notorious, that in instances without number, bribery and perjury are, under one shape or other, the returning officers. The business may indeed be so cleverly managed that proofs cannot easily be found. The bribe may be insinuated with a delicacy that sets vulgar suspicion at defiance. It may take the generous shape of loan to be repaid at convenience—a term which, is well understood to mean nine hundred and ninety nine years, at the least—or the munificent one of purchasing an article at ten or twenty times its value; or various others in the same style: and he must be the merest novice, or the veriest bungler, who cannot manage all the details of transactions of the kind, without the intervention of one ugly term that could wound the thin skin of honor—so called. With proper management, it is quite possible to conclude the bargain,—“to sell for gold, what gold can never buy”—with such a punctilious regard to the maxims of a conventional morality, as not to tinge the cheek of either giver or receiver with any unusual flush.

All this would do very well, were there no

standard of morals higher than that which human policy sets up for its own convenience, and which answers the purpose pretty well, of keeping the frame-work of society together in some sort of outward order. But there is a higher standard —high as the heaven, from whence it came, by which inward principle, as well as external deportment, is to be measured. It is unalterable, and unchangeable—it cannot be pared to dovetail with expediency, or lowered to meet the stunted growth of worldly morality. The Christian man is desired to refer all his actions to it; and if he wilfully and knowingly deviates from it, for profit, or pleasure, or any unallowed gratification, or any compliance with evil, under the plausible expectation that good may come, his own religion may not only be called in question, but what is of infinitely worse consequence, the reality of religion in the abstract will be doubted by the many who have never felt its power; and more injury will be done to the cause of God's Truth by his occasional swervings from the right line of Scriptural integrity, than by all the outrages upon morality perpetrated by him, whose mouth may literally be filled with cursing and bitterness, and who avowedly has no fear of God before his eyes.

The world perfectly understands the value of its own system of morals. It is made for the common wear and tear of a certain degree of civilization, without reference to higher principles; and so long as it answers that end, it does all that is expected from it. It is allowed, indeed, to bluster and talk big; but, if put to the proof—if called to stand in the imminent, deadly breach, it begs leave to decline the post, as one unsuited to its weakness and inexperience. So, it is seldom or never put to the proof, unless at the bidding of some raw enthusiast who falls in love with brave words, and who gets heartily laughed at for his credulity, when he complains of disappointment.

In like manner, honor finds its proper level, in the world's estimation, and no very weighty burden is laid on its shoulders. The world well knows that a man of honor may be a liar, a promise-breaker, a cheat, a jockey, a black leg, a — courteous reader, pardon the expression—blackguard. In short, he may be any thing, and every thing that is inherently dishonorable; and if, as opportunities occur, he gives full proof of his moral deficiencies, nobody wonders—indeed, the wonder would be at the wonderer.

Such a man may consistently enter into all the

spirit of an election, and reject no means, however opposed to the precepts of our holy faith, to insure success. He never pretends to be influenced by higher motives than those of worldly advantage; and this he pursues by means so purely worldly, that whatever other charge may lie at his door, that of hypocrisy can never be imputed to him. That he does an infinity of mischief in his generation, there can be no doubt; but then, every body understands that it is mischief, and they may avoid it if they please. There is no disguise, no pious fraud in the business, from beginning to end. Principals, agents, tools of all ranks and descriptions, neither desire, nor pretend to the blessing of God upon their doings. They unaffectedly live without Him in the world. They put religion so entirely away from them, that its interests can never be compromised by their irregularities.

It is not so, when a man who professes to direct his steps by the rule of God's word engages in so critical an enterprise. What is not only tolerated, but applauded in others, is matter of keen and bitter reproach, if resorted to by him. He is watched with a jealous scrutiny that takes cognizance of his minutest actions. They are weighed in a balance so peculiarly

adjusted, that the tithing of a hair thrown into his scale will outweigh enormities piled thick in the other. It is his time of trial. His principles are then brought to the test. His sincerity is put to the proof. The real value of his religion is estimated by a rigid integrity, which is expected to place him high above the reach of temptation ; and if he fails in the slightest particular, either by his own overt act, or through the intervention of his agents, religion bears the blame ; its power is denied, and its influence scoffed at, as mere pretension. Nor is the evil confined to the openly profane—to those who are on the watch to spy out evil, and to rejoice in it ; it too often exerts a deadly influence upon weak-minded persons, who, though well-inclined in the main, and convinced that the revealed will of God, ought to regulate human practice, in some degree or other, are nevertheless easily led to increase or diminish their quantum of practice, according to the example of those professing to adjust their conduct by the law and the testimony.

Whether any of the individuals with whom this story has to do, while busied in preparations for the coming contest, ever considered the matter with reference to its moral, or immoral results, or whether they had, or had not, consci-

entious scruples as to some of the means by which their object was most likely to be gained, we shall not now stop to inquire, but simply relate facts as they present themselves.

During the progress of the registry, both parties were equally on the alert, and had what is called fair play, as the Assistant Barrister was a gentleman, who did not allow his political feelings—whatever they might be—to bias him in the performance of a public duty. So far as he could come at the truth, strict justice was done; but hard swearing on the part of the Papists, baffled the strictest scrutiny in many cases, and a number of fictitious freeholds were registered. The Priests allowed of no compunctionous visitings of conscience to influence their unfortunate dependents. The curse of the Church was denounced against all who disobeyed its commands, however palpably unrighteous; and where that threat might have failed, either in the case of those—not a few—who secretly derided the system of lies offered to their belief, or of those who objected to bring sin of supererrogation on their souls, by perjury that could profit them nothing; the vengeance of man, sternly threatened, and summarily executed, insured a prompt accordance with the commands of their pastors.

Some, with leases ready to expire, and the displeasure of the landlord staring them in the face made every effort that cunning could suggest, to escape the dilemma in which the possession of a vote would place them. A very few succeeded: their failure being placed to the account of their stupidity, and the cleverness of the cross examination on the other side. But in general, the plans were so well laid by the priests, and the victims so well tutored, that they could not plead ignorance of what was required, and the fault of a failure lay as sin unexpiated and unexpiable at their door. Yet, with all their influence, these reverend gentlemen must have found it rather troublesome to deal with some of their flock, and by no means pleasant to answer all the demands made upon them; for, strenuously as they have always exerted themselves to keep their wretched slaves in ignorance, they have not been able in every case to stifle the voice of conscience, without volunteering a responsibility so awful, that nothing short of unqualified atheism could excuse it. The following conversation took place, at the time to which we are alluding, and the expressions in italics are given verbatim.

“ I’ll be looking to see you, Wednesday next,

at my place," said a Protestant to a Roman Catholic neighbour, "to give me help with the turf."

"I'll not fail you if I can, Mr. Morton," he answered, "only I can't promise for certain, as who knows but that's the day I may be summoned to the court."

"Why, Paddy, man! what business have you at the court?"

"Haven't I to register my freehold, as well as another, Mr. Morton?"

"Your freehold! Is it to me you hold such discourse, Paddy? Is it three months, all out, since you told me that *if your landlord did not give you an abatement, you must throw up the land, for that you could not support yourself out of it, much less swear that you had any profit from it?*"

"True for you, Mr. Morton, *but what can I do, and I under orders from my priest?*"

"Folly, man, folly! *why did you not tell the gentleman that you would be forsown, if you did such a thing?*"

"*I told him all that, Mr. Morton.*"

"*Well, and what did he say?*"

"*There was no excuse for me. I must register.*"

"*And did you say nothing, Paddy?*"

*“ I did, Mr. Morton. I said, that in that case, he must promise to take the sin on himself.”*

*“ What did he answer to that?”*

*“ He gave me no answer. He said nothing here or there.”*

*“ Now, Paddy, I always thought you an honest man, and a man of your word; and tell me this, Will you go up upon the table, and take the book in your hand, and swear what you know to be a lie, at any man’s bidding?”*

*“ I will, Mr. Morton, if he promises to take the sin on himself, and not else.”*

We never since inquired whether Paddy was called upon to register, or how he and the priest settled the matter; but we have no doubt, that out of the numbers who perjured themselves on that occasion, there was scarcely an individual who did not quiet his conscience, where there was one, under the sincere conviction, that whatever sin there might be in the act, the priest must answer for it all, since it was committed by his order.

There was comparatively, but little false swearing among the Protestants. We say comparatively; for the ungodly and profane are not confined within the pale of any one form of religion, however corrupt. But, whatever the

amount might be, religion did not sanctify the crime ; neither were the offenders deceived as to its veniality, or their own responsibility. They perfectly understood that their religion abhorred the offence ; that the guilt could not be transferred by bargain, between man and man ; and consequently, they boldly undertook the penalty in their own persons.

Mr. Sylvester Fogarth was, to do him justice, indefatigable in his employer's service ; indeed, as much so, as if he had been engaged on the other side, which was suspected to have his warmest affections. The fact was, that self interest was the governing principle of his life, and as the Bindon connection promised fairer for *that*, in the long run, he resolved to engage it more firmly on his side by every exertion in his power. He was of considerable service, from his thorough knowledge of the county, in disfranchising several on the Popish side ; and when the registry was completed, and the books polled, the prospect for the Protestant candidates, though not quite so bright, as might be wished, was, nevertheless, tolerably hopeful. A few hesitators might be argued into a right mind ; a few might be bought ; a few frightened ; a few might, in the nick of time, fall sick or die ; and

adding all these fews together, the amount was more than sufficient to oust the radicals. On trial, however, the buying part of the business was found to be even more difficult than Fogarth had suspected. The priests had completely spoiled the market—would they had done it from a purer motive!—The vote which on a former occasion could be obtained for a few pounds, could not now be had at any price. This encroachment upon old established rights, as they were deemed, though submitted to, was resented loudly and bitterly by those among the peasantry who preferred their own advantage to the public good. Many a malediction was breathed in private against the priests for stepping between them, and a lawful perquisite; and many a complaint was made to Mr. Fogarth of the tyranny that opposed their compliance with his open-handed entreaties. None were more eloquent on this head than Mrs. Kenawley, the wife of a soft kind of easy-going man, who seldom meddled in politics, and at every other time, had voted with his landlord, but who now took the opposite side; nor could the most cogent arguments prevail on him to change his determination.

“There is no use in talking to him, Master Sylvester,” said his wife. “The man couldn’t

do it. The country won't allow it, and he must go with the rest of them."

"Have you no longer time of your farm than old Mrs. Pemberton's life?" asked the attorney.

"Not a day," she answered. "And, as sure as that blessed stick is in your hand, Master Sylvester, the after-grass won't be withered on that woman's grave, till me and my family has the wide world for an inheritance. It needs no fortune-teller to shew what's before us, if we gain our landlord's ill will."

"I would rather have a snug eighteen acres and a good cabin like this, than such a big estate, and so many laying claim to it," said Sylvester; "and if Mathias would take the advice of a friend, he might keep his landlord's friendship, and you might sell that little tub of butter, at a reasonable price. I myself would not grudge from ten to fifteen shillings a pound for butter of your making, knowing what a name you have in the market."

"It won't do, Master Sylvester, nor double the money, nor ten times more to the back of it—though I thank you kindly for your good will. May the sorrah bother *them*!—I hope there's no sin in that bad prayer—that never did us good, but harm, putting this world again us, and

leaving us small chance for another. For, the truth is, Master Sylvester, we are robbed and peeled, with all the collections in the chapel for parliament and pensions. And I leave it to you, that if all our little substance goes in that way, how are we to make provision for purgatory? Oh! that's true! you dont believe in purgatory, but I do: and I tell you this good day, that I would not trust them to take me out of it, if I didn't leave a trifle after me, to pay for the masses."

"There is no fear that you will go there at all," said Fogarth;" nor is there any fear of harm happening to body or soul, if Mathias here acts like a man. Mathias, I know your heart is with us, so, don't let cowardliness keep back your hand from us. Your landlord is well able to protect you and all his tenants."

"He is not," said Kenawley. "There is no protection from law or magistrate for the man that offends the country. You tell no lie when you say my heart is with you. I would do any thing for the landlord that gave me a living, when my father's patrimony was scattered among strangers—any thing, Mr. Fogarth, short of giving myself and my family up to murder—I can look beggary and starvation in the face before *that*."

"Nonsense, nonsense, man! Listen to rea-

son—reason in the shape of good bank notes, which will put beggary out of the question."

"One word for all, Sir," said Kenawley, "when I refused the man that befriended me in my low condition, it is not likely that I would compliment another by listening to reasons; so it will be saving you trouble if you say no more about it. Keep your bank notes: I don't covet them. I never yet stretched out my hand for a bribe: and I hope it will fall from my body, before it would help me to that wickedness."

"Mathias Kenawley," cried his wife, "you are as unguarded a man as ever sot upon a chair, to go and affront a gentleman after so indiscreet a manner. Who evened the word bribery to you, that you give your tongue such a holiday? If Master Sylvester in civility, offered to stand your friend on an occasion; and if he wouldn't begrudge to give me a trifle above market price for my little butter, supposing I wanted to sell it, is that an offence to make you act ungenteel in your own house? and I can tell you, Mathias, proud as you are of your family—that my mother—heavens be her bed!—who would have cut off her two hands, before she would do a mean turn, sold a donny bit of a year-old to Mr. Ambrosse, for fifteen guineas in gold, the very first poll he stood in the county."

“ Your father didn’t take the bribery oath, after the bargain, I hope,” quietly answered her husband.

“ You see, Master Sylvester,” she said turning to Fogarth, “ what an unreasonable man it was my lot to come across. Just like all the Kenawleys—as fractious a family as ever broke bread, by all accounts, though once high up in the country. Now, there he sits, talking bribery, and bringing discredit on my people, as if they did the world and all, when his own lips told me, that Dick Curtis, one of your own sort, promised to vote for that nager at Shriveltown, on the priest passing his word to him, for three half-year’s rent, the day after the election. I wonder would he thrave up bribery to snuffling Gurteen, in the unmanly way he did to you. The priests, Master Sylvester—the priests is the top and the bottom of all mischief—dirty water upon the whole pack of them! I say in my heart: and I hope there is no harm in only wishing that to them.”

Mr. Fogarth parfed from Mrs. Kenawley with a hearty shake of the hand, and a few very expressive hints to her husband, saying he would soon call again, when he hoped he would see things as they ought to be seen.

### CHAPTER III.

IMMEDIATELY on leaving Kilronan Park, Mr. Prior communicated to Miss Dickinson the intelligence of Lady Clanerris's intended visit, being aware that an event of the kind would considerably annoy her, if taken by surprise; as her internal arrangements were not always exactly suited to receiving very genteel, strange company without some preparation. Miss Dickinson was a genuine specimen of a class almost, if not altogether extinct—the real-Irish, hospitable, uneducated, unorderly, untravelled, country gentlewoman. Her family, originally English, had obtained a considerable grant of land in Ireland in the time of Cromwell, the greater part of which, by degrees, passed into other hands; being sold, or mortgaged, or got rid of, in any, and every possible way, by its improvident owners. Still enough remained, at the time that Miss Dickinson's father came into possession, to give him a certain degree of consequence in the

county, and to rank him among its acknowledged gentry, even at a time when real gentry were not very uncommon in Ireland. He, in turn, contrived to lessen the rent-roll and to swell the amount of debt, bequeathed to him, with the estate, by his uncle; and at his death, he left two grown-up sons, and a marriageable daughter, totally unprovided for, and dependant upon their elder brother.

This gentleman, Gregory Dickinson, Esq. was a goodnatured man, who would, with a hearty welcome, have allowed all the world to live in his house, if it could contain them; and therefore the younger branches of his family never thought of waiting for an invitation, but made themselves at home at once; and without a penny that could lawfully be called their own, managed to make a very handsome appearance, and to be pretty nearly as well supplied with money as the heir himself. The good natured Gregory, at length, broke his neck at a fox hunt—a common occurrence in a sporting country—and dying intestate, the property reverted to Leonard Dickinson, Esq. his next brother.

Leonard was by no means so hospitably inclined as Gregory. He sometimes gave tolerably broad hints that he would prefer having his house

to himself; but as this unsocial humour usually seized him after dinner—a time when his intellects were seldom quite clear—no notice was taken of it; and the family arrangement continued on the same footing, till his death, which happened some dozen years after he inherited the family estate.

Oliver, the last of the Dickinsons, was an ill-conditioned, waspish fool, fond of low company, and low pleasures. Any little appearance of respectability, hitherto kept up in the household, disappeared when he became the master. In wasteful extravagance, he was not exceeded by any member of his proverbially-extravagant family, but he wished to spend all on himself. Nothing but the grossest flattery could extract a shilling from his pocket: and while he indulged himself in every gratification that pleased his own depraved taste, he grudged the commonest necessaries to his unfortunate sister, who, from strong necessity, was obliged to remain in his house, though almost daily ordered to provide another lodging.

This was a period of real suffering to poor Miss Fiddy; but as she confessed afterwards, it was not without its advantages. Being often obliged to keep close to her room for weeks toge-

ther, through fear of encountering her amiable brother, and having no taste for needle work, she employed herself in the improvement of her mind, by keeping up her reading, as she said, which otherwise might have stood a fair chance of being utterly forgotten. Her library consisted of some odd volumes of the *Tattler* and *Spectator*; nearly the whole of *Shakespeare*, *Nelson's Fasts and Festivals*, *Sir Charles Grandison*, *Drelincourt on Death*, an elementary work on *Astronomy*, and more than two thirds of *Tom Jones*. This collection belonged to her mother, and chance had added to it—for she never could tell how they came into the house—*Hume's England*, *Goldsmith's Rome*, and *the Pilgrim's Progress*. These books were not merely read, they were studied; their contents remembered, and the meaning, sometimes, pretty well understood: so that although her information was confined exactly within that range; besides being never perfectly sure that all the personages in all her books were not real characters, yet she could not be accounted ignorant—nay, we aver, that many *governessed* young ladies, who would, no doubt, be greatly amused at her pronunciation of the names of some of her favourite Roman heroes, may not be half so really well-informed as Miss Fiddy.

Oliver never put his hourly threat of turning her out of doors into execution: but, year after year, he grew more and more savage; and her situation was gradually becoming nearly unbearable, when he died, just in time to save a remnant of the property, now frittered away to about two hundred and fifty pounds a year, which, as heir at law, reverted to her. By the advice of her friends, she set the family mansion, nearly tumbling about her ears, and rented a small house in the village of Oranard, where she had constantly resided for nearly twenty years.

It may be easily supposed that Miss Fiddy was not young, but nobody could guess—though every body tried—how old she was. The date of her birth was a mystery never developed. Whether she was older than all, or any of her brothers, was a question impossible to decide. At the period to which our story refers, she appeared to be about seventy; but tradition assigned her a more venerable age. Peter Kean, the oldest man in the neighbourhood—then in his eighty seventh year, declared, on the authority of his mother, that the day of his birth, Miss Fiddy, a good slip of a girl—he supposed about fifteen—called in with a maiden aunt, to see the lying-in woman: and Mr. Fogarth testi-

fied to having seen a lease, drawn ninety six years before, in which, Fridiswid Dickinson was one of the lives.

These testimonies were, however, far from satisfactory, when it was remembered that Peter enjoyed the well-earned character of a notorious romancer; and that no fewer than four Fridiswid Dicksons had their names registered on so many grave-stones in the parish church-yard, to one of whom the lease in question most probably referred. Indeed, with the exception of a slight failure of hearing, she had no symptoms of very advanced life. Her light grey eye was undimmed, her complexion fresh, her figure erect, and her step firm. Still, nobody ever remembered Miss Fiddy young. Persons of the greatest veracity, verging to sixty, agreed as to her elderly appearance within their earliest recollections; and the general opinion was, that if she had not passed her hundredth year, she was not far from it. No clue to the truth could be obtained from herself. If she knew her age, she concealed it with a caution that baffled both the ingenuity of circuitous inquiry, and the blunt impertinence of a downright question. Dates had no place in her memory. "It was a long time ago," was the general æra from which she

counted all events; and, "I heard tell," was the only knowledge she would confess to of circumstances that must have fallen within the range of her own recollection.

In common with the generality of her countrymen and countrywomen she had a good deal of family pride; and claimed the kindred of a third and fourth cousinship with some families, who except, on very particular occasions, seemed disposed to forget the relationship. But she was still more proud of her fortune—the estate, as she called it; and always spoke of Ardcarnacarrighy as one of the handsomest places, for its size, in Ireland. This weakness may be excused, when we remember that she had experienced the misery of dependance, and that any income which freed her from its galling fetters, must have been accounted, not merely a competence, but, absolute wealth. Besides, reduced as the Ardcarnacarrighy estate was, it was still a pretty wind-fall that must come to somebody after her death. Many eyes were in consequence fixed upon it, and much court paid to the heiress by numerous distantly-connected expectants, who flattered her into the conviction that herself and her estate were of no small importance in the world's estimation.

Flattery, though very acceptable, could not, however, succeed in changing a determination made on coming in to the family possessions, though, for some time, kept a profound secret, that her nearest relative, whether male or female, should be her heir. Mr. John Sheridan, the son of a first cousin, was accordingly fixed upon as the future representative of the Dickinsons, much to his satisfaction, when the secret transpired; as his patrimony, daily dwindling away by Irish economy, scarcely sufficed to keep his hunter in tolerable order. But years rolled on, and while the old lady continued young and healthy, the young gentleman grew old in years, and older in constitution; and at last was carried to his grave, without enjoying the long expected possession.

Miss Dickinson was sincerely grieved for his loss; and the more so, because she had to seek for another heir among connexions so distant, and so little known to her that she felt afraid of being deceived as to their pedigree. In due time, however, the undoubted next of kin was discovered in the person of Teresa Hamilton, the grand-daughter of Fridiswid Dickinson, her grand-uncle's only child; and Ardcarnacarrighy was again provided with an heir, or rather, heiress presumptive.

Nothing could be more fortunate for Miss Hamilton at the time, for she had been lately left an orphan, nearly penniless; and very willingly accepted the invitation given by her relation, whom she had never seen, to live with her as a companion, with the promise of the family estate in reversion. It was not difficult to live on friendly terms with Miss Dickinson, as she made it a point never to quarrel with any body unless she was affronted; and congratulated herself upon never having an enemy in the world, but the Knights of Derryfane, who, though she wished them no evil, she was sure, never could come to good. Miss Hamilton was therefore as happily circumstanced as could reasonably be expected; and though the ladies were as ill-suited to each other as any two human beings could be, yet they never quarrelled, and imperceptibly became almost attached to each other. The secret of this good understanding between two such opposite characters, placed in rather trying circumstances, was simply this, they both understood and practised good-breeding—that Christian grace too often forgot, except on company days, but which more perhaps than any other tends to promote family happiness.

Teresa Hamilton, though the daughter of a

man scarcely above the rank of a small farmer, without any opportunity of mixing in higher society, or any instruction in the conventional forms of the superior classes, was, nevertheless, as to manners, not merely a genteel girl—she was something approaching to—we cannot say, elegant—for that term would convey an idea of more than we mean—indeed, of more than perhaps we have a very distinct conception of, when applied to men and women. We must satisfy ourselves with saying, that she was altogether a very superior young person in mind and manners, who impressed strangers with the opinion that she must always have moved in good society.

Miss Dickinson's slovenly mode of living was a source of secret annoyance to her young companion. The Ardcarnacarrighy style embraced profusion without comfort, and finery without cleanliness; and the Oranard establishment, on its reduced means, was conducted on the same plan. The servants, consisting of Abby Sessnan, the maid of all work, Tom Mullaheran, the outside man—usually styled “my boy,” by his mistress—and Naty Foody, the gossoon—had each an assistant, who, in lieu of wages, got their bit in the house, when any thing was going. Among them all, there was

much running, and scrambling, and pushing, and bawling, and breaking, and losing, and mislaying, in every department, and very little work done. Miss Hamilton meditated a gradual reformation ; but the work was beyond her powers. The servants, all old followers, or the children of old followers of *the family*, disliked new fashions, and would not learn them ; and Miss Dickinson never could comprehend how the system, which had done so well in Ardcarnacarrighy could be changed for the better. Teresa's innovations were consequently circumscribed to her own sleeping apartment, and, by degrees, to the sitting-room, which could be kept in some order, by her own manual labour, without causing unnecessary trouble to mistress or servants. The carpet was darned, the chair-covers mended, the pier-glass dusted, and the loose paper pasted smoothly to the wall, and various other improvements completed, which met with Miss Dickinson's perfect approbation. But nothing could induce her to transfer the pictures that adorned the walls to a less conspicuous situation in the house, particularly six, wretched, flaring prints, in black frames, descriptive of "the progress of the prodigal son." These had been the gift of Mr. Sheridan, who persuaded her that they were

very valuable ; and she was confirmed in this opinion, by the sincere admiration of her tenants, when they came to pay their rent, and the outrageous praises bestowed upon them by many of her genteel neighbours, who often amused themselves at her expense. Her good breeding had never been so near failing, as when this proposal of removing them was delicately hinted. The word “interference” was on the point of escaping her, but she restrained her indignation, and only said very decidedly, that “there they should remain.—They were a present to her from a very near relation, who would not have parted with them to any body but herself. The best judges admired them ; so much so, that Mrs. Simpkins often brought strange ladies and gentlemen to look at them. Besides,” she added, “I consider them very instructive and warning. Nobody can look at them without thinking, and I often wish that they had been at Ardcarnacarrihy, when my poor brothers were alive. Nobody knows all the good they might have done them.”

Teresa forbore to press the subject farther. Miss Dickinson soon forgot that the proposal had ever been made, and the Prodigal Son maintained his place, in company with Louis XIV. Jane

Shore, the Duke of Cumberland, Sterne's Maria, and other equally renowned characters.

The whole household was put in requisition for the reception of Lady Clanerris. After a long discussion upon the genteelst way of opening the door, it was determined on Miss Hamilton's suggestion, that, as Tom's best coat was rather the worse for the wear, Abby, in a clean cap, and white apron, should act as porter, with Naty Foody behind her to give her courage, and to hold the door, which had an ugly trick of clapping in the face of those entering, unless strongly pulled back. Just as all the preparations were concluded, and Miss Dickinson congratulating herself that she had a full hour to recover breath before the genteel visiting time, she was thrown into a new flurry by the arrival of a messenger with a large melon, and a remarkably obliging invitation to herself and Miss Hamilton, from Sir Andrew and Lady Shrivel, requesting the favour and pleasure of their company for a few days in the week following at Shriveltown.

"I give you my word, Terasa," said Miss Dickinson, on her return from the kitchen, where she had gone to order refreshments for the gossoon from Shriveltown. "I give you my word, Terasa, that it is a very genteel, and a very civil

note, and very thoughtful of Sir Andrew to offer to send the coach for us—don't you think so?"

Miss Hamilton laughed. "An election, I believe, Ma'am, always makes the candidates civil and genteel, and thoughtful, whatever they may be at other times."

"Very likely indeed, Terasa. The Shrivils and the Dickinsons were always intimate, as might be expected from the relationship between the families."

"I was not aware that you were acquainted with Lady Shrivel."

"Neither am I, Terasa. But, Sir Andrew, I know very well. He often breakfasted with me, on his way to the assizes, before the new road was made."

"Do you mean to accept the invitation?" inquired Miss Hamilton.

"I give you my word, Terasa, I am not resolved one way or other. It is a very busy time of the year to leave home, and not convenient just at present; but might it not look uncivil, if we refused?"

"I hope not, Ma'am. As, unless you particularly desire the contrary, I mean to refuse."

"I beg the word *desire* may never be mentioned between us, Terasa. You are your own mistress,

as every one is in my house. I don't feel myself prepared to go visiting on so short a warning ; but I would not do an unpolite thing for the world, particularly by a relation who sends a boy nine long miles with a fine melon, and so genteel a worded note along with it. Indeed, the Shrivels were always a very friendly family. No people could be so intimate as them and the Dickinsons in my father's life time—and the friendship, you see, *Terasa*, is not forgot."

"Really Miss Dickinson," said the young lady, "you must excuse me, if I suspect the election has refreshed their memory just now. Sir Andrew remembers your four votes ; and I venture to say we may thank them for the melon and the invitation."

"I give you my word, *Terasa*, it may be so. The Shrivels and the Dickinsons were always the best of neighbours : and it is but natural that Sir Andrew would expect me to wish for my own blood relation by the grandmother's side—she was Shrivell—than for one that's neither kith nor kin to me. For, as the saying is"—

"Pardon me for interrupting you, but though I confess the claim of relationship to be very strong, yet you remember saying that you would not decide, till all the candidates were declared ;

and that you would consider their claims impartially, before you influenced your tenants."

"I remember it well, Terasa, and I will stick to it, as I ever do to my word, once it is given. For, if Sir Andrew was to step into the room this moment, though I would treat him as a gentleman ought to be treated, and why not?—still I would tell him, that as long as I had four votes, I would give them according to the best of my ability, and the true feeling of my conscience."

"As you seem rather averse to leaving home, at this time," said Teresa. "Shall I write an apology at once?—We may be detaining the messenger too long."

"Very thoughtful, and very proper, Terasa. You will greatly oblige me by writing as civil and as obliging as you can. You can say that I did not cut the melon yet, but that it looks remarkable fine. I would not, for more than I am worth, slight one of the name; for I give you my word, Terasa, that the Shrivels and the Dickensons"—

"The lady's coach is driving up the street, like mad," said Naty Foody, bolting into the room, and standing stock still before his mistress.

"Dear me! dear me!" exclaimed Miss Dick-

inson, rising in haste, and pushing him out before her, “ the boy will spoil all with his vulgar tricks. Naty, didn’t I give you your directions? Abby, where are you?—Keep him I beg of you close behind the door; and only *you*, shew yourself. And when the futman says, ‘is Miss Dickinson at home?’ say, yes Sir.—Mind, say Sir, Abby, to the futman—and then, walk on, and open the parlour, and then, draw back close to the wall, and make a curtchy when the lady passes you, and then, shut the door; and then, don’t stop listening, but walk back quiet into the kitchen, till I call you.—Now, let me in, let me in—the coach is stopping—Oh! Terasa! I must beg of you to pull your chair away. You are hiding the best part of my prodigal son.—Thank you.—That will do—now we are all right.”

All their complicated manœuvres were so admirably managed by Abby and Naty, that no accident happened: and without a moment’s delay, Lady Clanerris and Miss Bindon were ushered into the reception room,

## CHAPTER IV.

THE situation in which the four ladies found themselves placed, was so new to each, that after the first salutations, consisting of a low, slow, perpendicular curtsy, on the part of Miss Dickinson—one somewhat more inclining to the horizontal from Miss Hamilton—an indescribable kind of sweep from Lady Clanerris, and a scarcely perceptible bend from Miss Bindon—a sensation of unusual and unexpected awkwardness seized upon them all. At the lowest calculation, half a century must have elapsed since Miss Dickinson had come in contact with a Viscountess; and Teresa had never, till within the last few hours, even dreamed of arriving at such honor; and it is not therefore to be wondered at, if, on the first shock of the encounter, they should feel a little agitated. Lady Clanerris was however still more embarrassed, for they knew exactly the kind of behaviour expected from them, whereas, she was utterly at a loss to guess what species of de-

portment she should assume on such an extraordinary occasion. She had left her carriage with the laudable determination of being popular, and condescending, and agreeable : but the house, the room, the furniture, the ornaments, even the lady of the mansion, were so unlike any thing that she had ever before been called upon to encounter on visiting terms, that she could not, for a minute or two, find utterance for the most common place remark. Miss Dickinson, who rather approved of formality on a first introduction, as a sign of good manners, construed this silence most favourably for her visitor ; and quickly recovering her presence of mind, began the conversation by hoping that her Ladyship had not wet her feet as she got out of the carriage. Her Ladyship's answer was most satisfactory. She was not even conscious of the appearance of damp, on alighting.

“ I am rejoiced you escaped so well, Madam,” said Miss Dickinson. “ And indeed, my Lady, I had it sweep three times this morning, for there is apt to be a pool there, on ever so little rain. I have been looking for a flag for it, these four years, since the last was broke by my boy, mending the kitchen tongs on it.—Flagging, my Lady, is very scarce in this neighbourhood.”

The greater part of this speech was unintelligible to Lady Clanerris, but it was necessary to say something, and in her perplexity, she took up the last word as her cue.

“ You seem to have a very good neighbourhood, indeed. A great many very pleasing families.”

“ Very pleasing, and a very good neighbourhood, my Lady. Only I remember it better when I lived at the family sate—Ardcarnacarrighy—Madam, which is set to tenants at the present.”

Lady Clanerris smiled and bowed: and Miss Dickinson, after a short pause, continued,

“ I do not visit now far off, Madam, having but one horse, that is at work constantly: but my friends are very considerate. It is not passing an hour ago, that I got a very fine melon, and a very polite invitation from Sir Andrew and Lady Shrivel, nine miles off: offering to send the coach for me an my cousin, Miss Hamilton, to spend a few days with them.”

This announcement was by no means agreeable to her visitor, who trembled for the fate of the four votes. She however smiled and bowed again, and gave utterance to the monstrous untruth, that she heard they were very charming

people ; adding that she had not the honour of Lady Shrivell's acquaintance.

“ Neither have I, Madam. But I know Sir Andrew very well. He often breakfasted with me on his way to the assizes, before the new road was made. There is a relationship between the families, my Lady—my grandmother was Shrivell—and the Shrivells and the Dickinsons were always very intimate.”

The Viscountess, in her heart, regretted the relationship and intimacy, so apparently inimical to her interests, and resolved, however abruptly, to turn the conversation another way. Her eye fortunately rested at the moment, on some missionary wood-cuts, lying upon a work-table before Miss Hamilton, to whom she immediately addressed herself.

“ How very interesting the accounts of the missions among the heathen ! I suppose you have read Buchanan's researches ?”

“ A very long time since,” Teresa replied ; “ so long indeed, that I almost forget it.”

“ I have it at Kilronan Park,” said Lady Clanerris, “ and if you allow me, I shall have much pleasure in lending it to you.”

“ Your Ladyship is very obliging. But we are at present reading a very long work, which

will give us employment for a considerable time."

"Yes, indeed, my Lady," said Miss Dickinson. "What Terasa says is every word true. We are reading ever so many volumes of a book belonging to Mr. Barrymore; and he might be affronted if we gave it up for another."

"Mr. Barrymore, said the Viscountess, "is a most worthy person, and I am sure any book recommended by him must be excellent. You are very fortunate in having so exemplary a parish minister."

"Indeed we are, Madam. He is a charitable, humane man, greatly thought of by poor and rich."

"And his curate. He is also a very good clergyman."

Miss Dickinson paused. "I cannot say, my Lady, that I have much knowledge of him. He is here but a short time, and he is one of the Knights of Derryfane, who are all tall people, and speak with a loud voice."

Lady Clanerris perceived that the subject of the curate was not agreeable; and as five of the fifteen minutes which she allotted for her visit were unexpired, she was again driven to books to eke out the time.

“ Do you take any of the Periodicals, the Reviews, or Blackwood?”

“ I give your Ladyship my word,” answered Miss Fiddy, “ that I never was at a review but once; and that was at a place called the Curragh of Creeve, about eighteen miles the other side of Ardcarnacarrighy. It was a very fine sight, but we have no such doings at all now, in this place.”

“ Lady Clanerris means publications called Reviews,” said Miss Hamilton, so composedly, that Miss Bindon’s features, just relaxed into a smile, instantly recovered the somewhat sulky expression that they had worn through the entire visit. “ You remember Mr. Banks lending us a number of the Quarterly Review, with which we were very much entertained.”

“ I do indeed, Terasa. I beg your Ladyship’s pardon a thousand times, for my mistake; and, I give you my word, Madam, I did not mean to say what was not true. Yes, Madam, we do take a Review, whenever we can get it, as we take every thing else—Terasa reads more than I do, though I am fond of reading. Indeed I think reading very improving.”

Lady Clanerris, determined, if possible, to entail something like an obligation upon so influ-

ential a person, again volunteered her literary services in the most obliging manner.

“ I can, with the greatest pleasure, supply you with the last number of the Quarterly Review. Pray, let me send it to you.”

“ Madam,” said Miss Dickinson earnestly, “ I beg to be excused. I could not think of putting you to so great an inconvenience, through your over politeness. With so many young ladies and gentlemen at home to be educated, you can badly spare your books. Their improvement ought not to be neglected, for the convenience of strangers. That young lady,” she added, looking very civilly at Miss Bindon, “ I suppose, reads a great deal?”

The young lady, who, though presented at court, and tolerably fashionable, was just as deficient in good manners, as the aggregate of her cotemporaries, whether high or low-born, first stared, and then giggled, but made no attempt at answering, and Lady Clanerris was obliged, in a very hurried manner, to vouch for the requisite quantity of her daughter’s studies.

“ History, Madam,” continued Miss Dickinson, “ is my favourite reading: and indeed, in my mind, it is both instructive and improving.”

“Particularly so. Nothing can be more instructive than history.”

“I am glad to hear your Ladyship say so. I have read the Roman history, till I have trembled, there are so many bad people in it. Terrible people, Madam, I assure you. And though not in the habit—as Terasa, and all that knows me, can witness—of speaking ill of the worst—afraid of what might be said of myself—yet it has often struck me, that Naro was too bad, and that his poor mother was greatly to be pitied.”

“Greatly to be pitied. He was a very shocking character.”

“I am much obliged to your Ladyship for your good opinion; and since you are so polite, I will take the liberty also of remarking, that Brutus, though so cried up by book-writers, who ought to know best, was, in my weak judgment, a very odd sort of a man; stabbing poor Cæsar for nothing at all, when there was plenty busy at the work, to save him the trouble. To be sure, killing people was more common in them days, than it is now: and there is a saying, that when one is at Rome, one must do as Rome does.”

“Certainly,” answered Lady Clanerris, and without knowing precisely what she was going to say, continued. “We are very much creatures

of imitation ; and——our habits and feelings are so different from those of the old Romans, that we cannot form any estimate of——their habits and feelings.”

“ Exactly my thoughts, Madam, only better expressed. They were, as you remark, the unfeelingest and the wickedest people ; and I often am glad that they were all dead out of the world before my time, for they would stop at nothing. But, Madam, I don’t mean to charge them all alike. That would be saying what was not true. There was one in particular, I can’t help thinking was a good man—that was Skippo—he is my favourite *haro*, and I would be glad to know if your Ladyship approves of him.”

Miss Bindon’s small quantum of good breeding was on the point of evaporating altogether in a burst of laughter ; and her mother, who could scarcely resist her own inclination to smile somewhat too decidedly, after hastily professing all due admiration of the favourite *haro*, took leave and departed precisely with the same forms that had attended her entrance.

“ I give you my word, Terasa,” began Miss Dickinson, the moment the carriage drove from the door, “ it is ever so long since my eyes lit upon so elegant, and so genteel, and so well-

bred a lady. Affable and polite and proper, and not one bit too free—just what she ought to be. If Captain Bindon is like his mother, I would not be surprised if he carried the county, smack-smooth, before him."

"Mr. Barrymore says he is very like his mother," said Miss Hamilton.

"Then you may depend upon it, Terasa, he ought to be proud of the resemblance, and very likely he *is*.—Now, Terasa, I am not going to make up my mind—You may trust me for not breaking my word—but, there is no harm in thinking, in a careless kind of way, that it might be for the best, if Sir Andrew and Captain Bindon had the county all to themselves."

"The general opinion is," replied Terasa, "that both cannot be returned. Parties run too high to expect that. Very few Protestants will support Sir Andrew, and fewer Roman Catholics will dare vote for Captain Bindon."

"That is a pity—a very great pity—Terasa. One of them being a near relation of my own—my second cousin, once removed; and the other, the son of such a mother—a lady, so well-informed and so polite. Indeed, the whole family have agreeable manners; for, though Miss Bindon is not equal to her mother, still, she is silent

and modest, with may be, a little too much bashfulness, for her age and opportunities—only that will go off in time.—But, indeed, Terasa, you must excuse me, if it came into my mind, that you might have talked more to her, considering you were at home, and she a stranger that was a little dashed. Don't you think it would have been a pretty attention, if you offered to explain the pictures to her? Young people like looking at pictures; and my prodigal son is not only handsome, but many people have considered it instructive and improving."

" I spoke two or three times to Miss Bindon, Ma'am, and she scarcely answered. She appeared to prefer listening to your conversation with her mother."

" You may be sure, Terasa, that was all modesty and respect to her elders, for she is but young, and inexperienced in the ways of company. I can well see that Lady Clanerris rears her family prudent and proper, and that brings another thing to my mind, Terasa, which you must excuse me if I mention. I am still a little dubious if it did not look mean and unfriendly not to offer a bit of lunch to her ladyship, after her drive. I never let high or low leave my house without lunch before. Young people have good

appetites, and Miss Bindon, when her eyes were straying all about the room, was perhaps looking to see if there was a chance of satisfying a craving of hunger."

" You need not be uneasy, Ma'am. They called on Mrs. Banks before they came here, and she always gives luncheon ; so that the young lady could not absolutely suffer from hunger, unless her appetite is very extraordinary.—But we are forgetting the messenger from Shriveltown. Are you still determined to send an apology ?"

" I think so, Terasa. Indeed, I judge it best not to go so far this busy season. You may say *that* ; and word your answer, I beg of you, as genteel, and as proper, as it ought, considering how friendly it was of Sir Andrew to send a melon of such a size, nine long miles, with seven children at home to eat it. Only, they were always friendly ; for, I give you my word, Terasa, the Shrivels and the Dickinsons were as intimate as any thing, when the family lived at Ardcarnacarrighy—a place that will one day belong to you, Terasa, and that many people have considered one of the handsomest places in Ireland for its size."

## CHAPTER V.

We now return to Mr. Fogarth, who, on leaving Kenawley's cabin, turned his horse's head towards a mansion of more note, even Ardcarnacarrighy, then occupied by a farmer, named Simon Dillon, a man with the reputation of considerable wealth, acquired, as he often boasted, by honest industry: while general report left out the word *honest*, and though obliged to confess the industry, tacked usury, roguery, and oppression to it. Still, he was a rising man, and gained his full share of that respect always paid to wealth, no matter who possesses it. More than one letter from gentlemen farmers, on the subject of discounting bills, had already reached him, addressed to Simon Dillon, Esquire; and Miss Dickinson, though she scouted the Esquireship, had lately acknowledged his growing gentility by offering him refreshment in the parlour, instead of, as heretofore, leaving him to the entertainment of Abby Sessnan, in the kitchen. For this

unusual stretch of hospitality, she excused herself to Abby, who was rather scandalized at the condescension.

“ Tenants, Abby, are people that ought to be considered, and Simon Dillon is a tenant, and a punctual man—a man, too, that I give you my word, could buy Ardcarncarrighy itself, if I wanted to sell it, which I would not do, supposing I was starving. Then, Abby, you ought to know that lunch is different from a *male*. An infarior may eat it in company with his betters, because they need not put a bit into their mouth. So, you see, Abby, that lunch is out of the question. It is nothing one way or other.”

Fogarth and Dillon were, what is called, great friends. Not that there was any real regard between them, or that they had the slightest confidence in each other; but there were traits in the characters of both that called forth their mutual admiration. They had the same love of money, the same disregard of the means of acquiring it, and the same talent for holding it fast, when acquired. Simon Dillon knew his young friend to be a clever, unprincipled scoundrel, consequently, judging from his own experience, a fellow, likely to rise in the world; and at last, consented, after many pressing solicitations, to accept him as a

son-in-law, if, on watching his progress for a year or two, he could reasonably hope that the anticipations of his future success in life were likely to be realized. The delay was not quite according to Sylvester's wishes, but he was obliged to submit, as the elderly gentleman's determination was proof against all his eloquence.

Margaret Dillon was perfectly satisfied with her father's choice, which, in fact, was her own, before his consent was asked; for Mr. Fogarth had not so much relied upon his good will, as to neglect making himself so agreeable to the daughter, that her affections were engaged at a very early stage of their acquaintance. The difference of religion—he being a Protestant, and she a Roman Catholic—never seemed to occupy a moment's consideration of any of the parties. In the case of the men, this was nothing remarkable. Neither had an atom of religion in kind or degree. But Margaret was a conscientious devotee, a strict observer of all the requirements of her church, and devoted to its interests. She was not ignorant of the infidel principles of her father and intended husband, which, at times, caused her a slight feeling of uneasiness; but, in the one case, she comforted herself by reflecting that her father, though careless and a scoffer, was

not a heretic, and that the priest could insure his salvation at any time, on being properly compensated: and, in the other, she was consoled by the secret hope of reclaiming him to the true faith, an event occurring so frequently in the intermarriages of Protestants and Roman Catholics, that she had little doubt of her success. The moral character of her lover, so far as honesty, integrity, and other like virtues were concerned, never disturbed her imagination.. Her estimate of right and wrong was formed from the lax code of her religion, which, allowing of venial sins, and providing for the safety of the offender by its numerous glosses and traditions, grants a liberty to the evil inclinations of human nature, unsanctioned by the law of God. Sin, in her opinion, was confined to a small catalogue of enormous transgressions, which her naturally conscientious spirit recoiled from ; and as Sylvester was unstained by any of the grosser crimes, she conceived him to be on a pretty even level with the remainder of his fellow-men; while in manner, air, dress, and address, he was infinitely superior to her father's other associates. Taking, therefore, every thing into consideration, Margaret Dillon contemplated her future prospects as Mrs. Sylvester Fogarth, with the happiest anticipa-

tions. She had drawn a prize, in what she heard called the lottery of life, and she esteemed herself the most fortunate of her sex.

Leaving Mr. Fogarth still on the road to Ard-carnacarrighy, we shall, without further apology, transport our readers there at once, for the purpose of introducing them to another young gentleman, fast rising into notoriety—Mr. Dixie Gregan—son to Lord Clanerris's head game-keeper, who taking advantage of Simon Dillon's absence—it being market-day—had sought and readily obtained a private interview with his daughter, a favour before granted him on one or two late occasions. We shall pass over the greater part of their conversation, transcribing just as much as suits our purpose, and quite sufficient, we hope, to clear Margaret's character from the suspicion of encouraging the addresses of a rival to her betrothed. Indeed, Dixie, though an admired public orator, was not a very likely person to win a lady's heart, particularly one already disposed of to a tall, well-looking, bronzed, big-whiskered fellow; for he was an ill-thriven little creature, who seemed never to have recovered the rickets; with monkeyish features, pallid complexion, and a shrill discordant voice. The only effort nature appeared to have

made towards humanizing his appearance, was the gift of a pair of small, keen, deeply-set eyes, which certainly did give expression to his countenance, when animated. Still it was an expression as far from agreeable, as ever beamed from any pair of eyes in any head whatever. Dixie, however, had a tongue, and a bitter one, which he had used so powerfully in public oratory, that it was employed by the priests in the more delicate task of private persuasion. On such an embassy he had been sent to Ardcarnacarrighy, and we shall commence our relation of the *tete a tete* by Margaret's reply to a very long, flowery, and pathetic eulogium on patriotism.

“ You might have said all that in half the words, Dixie, if there was any occasion for saying it at all: and if you don't choose to waste all the time till my father comes home in spouting, I would advise you to speak plain at once, and say what it is Mr. Gurteen wants me to do.”

“ Then first and foremost, Miss, he requires you to get a promise from Mr. Dillon, that he will give his vote to Sir Andrew and the other man of the people, whoever that may be. He keeps back too long from speaking out, so that the country is jealous of him.”

“ My father is a cautious man,” she answered,

“but there is no fear of him supporting such as Bindon and Ambrosse. I judge he is waiting till Miss Dickinson asks him to vote for her relation, Sir Andrew, and it would be prudent to pay her a compliment before another.”

“Don’t trust that old, doting Miss Fiddy,” said Dixie eagerly. “She has got into bad hands since she took a poor relation into the house to her. She was a hopeful woman before that. Tom Mullaheeran and Abby Sessnan laid it out to have the priest with her when she was dying; she was so partial to holy water and blessed candles; but since that one came, all is changed. Father Thrashogue is never asked inside the door, and the new rector and his black-mouthed curate are preaching there constantly.”

“Poor woman!” said Margaret, with a sigh. “Then she is fallen into bad hands indeed.”

“Yes, Miss Margaret,” almost screamed the gamekeeper’s son, in the enthusiasm of the moment, “and we may thank ourselves for that and every other misfortune. If we were true Christians, we would purify the country from the vermin that swallow us up. We would, like hereditary bondsmen, strike the blow, and burst the chains of blood-shedding slavery. We would”—

“ Dixie,” said Margaret impatiently, “ you are spouting again ; and it can’t be far from four by the sun coming round the corner.”

Dixie was nettled. “ What you call spouting, Miss Margaret, took four hundred a-year, out of Parson Barrymore’s pocket ; for it was my speech at Barrykilfane, with them very words in it, that done his business. But, spouting or not, isn’t what I say true ? An’t them that ought to be foremost keeping back ? Who puts a hand into his pocket to help the cause ? ”

“ You don’t do the people justice,” answered Margaret. “ The poorest give beyond their means. The collection in the chapel last Sunday proves that.”

“ It is not the poor I complain of,” replied Dixie ; “ the blame lies at the door of the rich.”

“ If you mean my father,” said Margaret, “ he is a positive man, who will not give his money till he gets some account of what was collected before. He is one not to be prescribed to ; so, there is no use in making him the talk of the country. At any rate, if he did not give with his own hand, I made up his share, and more than his share, out of my own little income.”

“ That is well known, Miss Margaret ; and the blessing of the poor and persecuted follow you

wherever your name is mentioned. But, all hands must be opened now, or we are lost for ever. Sir Andrew must be returned free of expense. The clergy have promised that; but, without they get assistance from friends, they must give up, and let our religion be trampled worse than ever."

"I don't understand all this," she answered. "Mr. Gurteen, when he first undertook the business, told me that he could command thousands if they were wanting."

"So he can, Miss, after a time; only that money can't be raised all at once. It is as sure as if it was in his pocket: and if he could borrow for a month or two, a trifle from them that could bear it, it would be paid back with interest when the county is carried."

"That is easily managed," said Margaret. "My father will lend any money on Mr. Gurteen's, or the Bishop's security."

"I may as well tell you plain, Miss Margaret, they would not lie under a compliment to him, knowing the way he speaks of them and other gentlemen of their profession. They will only ask them who they know will not publish it to their enemies. You are one they look to, to stand by them in this glorious struggle for our

rights, and lives, and our country ; and in the name, and for the good of our persecuted religion, I demand from you the loan of the three hundred pounds left you by your grandmother. I have my errand," he added, seeing that she hesitated, " from the man that has the care of your soul ; and I have authority to pass his word, that every farthing will be paid you back, if it came out of his own pocket."

" What hindered Father Gurteen from asking this himself ?" she inquired after a short pause.

" I can answer that question, Miss Dillon. He wished you to get the credit of doing a noble action, without force or compulsion. He knew that if you set the example of a good spirit, many would follow it ; and I am sorry to say of Catholics, that they are not zealous enough in the glorious cause. No," he continued vehemently, " now at this time, when every thing is in our favour, they will lose their opportunity ; and neither man, woman, or child, will give a helping hand to crush the profligate crew that are wanting to defile our altars, to murder our venerated pastors, and to torture and massacre our unoffending countrymen !"

" Dixie Gregan," said Margaret, " I do not believe that the Catholics are so mean-spirited

as you would lead me to think. At least, I know one who is prepared to do whatever is expected from her to shew her love to her country. Take this message from me to Father Gurteen. Tell him, body, soul, and substance, I give up into his hands, only let his own lips tell me what I ought to do. I don't mistrust your word; but, if I have to face my father's anger, it is not you that I would put between me and it.—Be going now, for the sun is getting low; and I would as soon not tell lies, if I could help it, in excuse for your calling here when you knew the master was from home."

Dixie had not long disappeared behind the orchard hedge, when Mr. Dillon and his son-in-law elect arrived. Both gentlemen were in excellent spirits: particularly the elder, who had realized a considerable sum that day, by a speculation which Sylvester had refused to join in some months before; and he bantered him as they sat over their punch after dinner, on his want of enterprise, while the other defended himself on the score of prudence.

"Slow and sure is my motto," he said, "and I have a suspicion it is the safest plan to follow; for, proud as you are of your lucky hit this morning, I would lay a round wager that it

would not cover all your losses by other ventures within the last twelvemonth."

"Done!" said Simon, triumphantly. "Put down a bundle of bank notes, to the value of what is in my hand, and we will soon see who wins."

"I won't bet," answered the man of law. "I am too good a Christian to make money in that heathenish manner."

"I always guessed you wanted spirit," said Simon, pocketing the money, and nodding at his daughter. "If I was a young girl, I would look out for a lad that had more smartness in him."

"I see how it is, Miss Dillon," said Fogarth. "He is getting so proud and grand with all his money, that he looks down on his old friends. At the rate he gets on, I would not be surprised at his setting up for the county to-morrow."

"Never fear me making a fool of myself at this time of the day," answered the old gentleman. "I made my little substance too hard to throw it to the dogs after that fashion."

"You need not throw a penny to cat or dog, if that's all your hindrance," said Fogarth. "Have not Gurteen and Thrashogue, in the name of the clergy promised to pay all ex-

penses on the part of the popular candidates?"

"The more fools they that would trust the like of them," said Simon. "Why man, they have as wide a swallow as yourself, and it would be a big promise would choak any one of the three."

"Indeed, father," said Margaret, earnestly, "I wish you would not speak so careless about the clergy; for, let them be what they may, you know they are holy men; and it is not becoming in one of their flock to fault them. Protestants have their own ends in running them down, but, surely, we should not follow their example."

"How do you feel after that sly wipe?" asked Dillon, laying his hand on Fogarth's shoulder.

"As for Father Gurteen," she continued with increasing earnestness, "he would not go back of his word if he passed it, for thousands: and, though Mr. Thrashogue may be over lively at times in his talk, and not so discreet as would become one of his cloth, still, he is a good friend to the people, and would spend his last penny to get justice for them."

"May be so," answered her father; "but I

said it before, and I say it again, that they are fools who trust one or other of them."

"Whether Thrashogue is a man of his word or not," said Fogarth, "I cannot say from my own knowledge, never having had any dealings with him; but this much I can say of him, that he is an off-hand, gentlemanly fellow, a pleasant companion, and a friendly neighbour."

"Listen to me," said Dillon, dropping his bantering tone and manner, "I am not joking now; so mind what I say—If ever you are married to that girl, and that Thrashogue is left in Innisraymond, keep her away from confession. She would learn more bad vice from him than ever would come into her head without a prompter."

"Father," said Margaret, "I wonder you don't see that you can't make little of Father Thrashogue in that way, without reflecting upon your own child at the same time."

"By no means," he replied. "I believe you are as innocent, and as well-inclined a girl as any in Ireland; and, that married or single, you would scorn at the corrupter that would tempt you from your duty: but, it shews little sense to go in harm's way, when one can keep out of it; and, it's no lie to say of them, that there are evil minded villains among the clergy, who take that

opportunity of saying things that a modest woman would be ashamed to listen to."

" Oh ! father !" said Margaret warmly, " You wrong them quite and entirely. There's not a priest in the world would behave after so outrageous a manner as you think."

" I won't be contradicted in my own parlour, Miss," he answered angrily, " above all, when I say nothing that isn't true. And how could you know anything about their mischievous tricks ? seeing I took good care to keep you out of their way. But I have a good right to know them. Wasn't my mother's brother a priest ? Wasn't my uncle's son by the father's side a priest ?— and, a more notorious pair of bad-conditioned blackguards you wouldn't find from this to Bantry Bay ; though one of them was accounted a saint, from all the miracles he did."

" I remember him very well ;" said Fogarth, " and a comical chap he was. However, Mr. Dillon, it would be hard to condemn all the profession for one or two black sheep. Won't you allow there are some decent men among them ? Old Gurteen, for instance."

" He is one of the best of them ; and the only priest, barring one more, that ever had a welcome in this house, in the way of his profession. As

I told you before, I knew them well in my young days ; and, when I married, though I was only a poor man, I had that much respect for myself, and the woman I was joined to, that I never allowed her to go in their way, till Gurteen came to the parish. To be sure, I paid them well, and they were wise enough to pocket the money, and wink at my undutifulness. I managed the same way with that girl, sitting there. I believe she has got no harm from them yet ; and, mind I tell you, when she has you for her protector, have a care what priest you ever let her bend her knee to."

" It is not likely," said Margaret, with a strong feeling of offended dignity, " that Mr. Fogarth, or any other, shall have that kind of trouble on my account. If I never can find a protector, but one that could think so mean of me, as to judge me capable of tolerating such wickedness, even from a bishop—Why, I will stay as I am, and try and protect myself to my dying day."

" And I," said her lover, with an air that seemed absolutely sublime in Margaret's eyes, " I would not marry a woman who required to be watched, if she brought the king's ransom for her portion. When I fixed my choice here, Mr.

Dillon, I well knew that your daughter would want no guardian, but her own prudence ; and I will always be content to leave her to that controul."

" Any how," persisted Simon, " keep a civil distance with Father Thrashogue, in the way of confession, when you set up housekeeping."

" I don't think much civilities will pass between us," replied Sylvester, " if he interferes with me again in the way he did this morning. I had just come round the two Lanigans, when that gentleman rode up ; and in one minute, he ordered them to tell me to my face, that they set their landlord and myself at defiance."

" I guess your bank isn't very strong," said Dillon, " since you make so little way with the freeholders."

" Bank, indeed !" said the attorney. " If I had the Bank of Ireland at my back, what good would it do to me when it can't buy off the priest's curses?"

" You never bid up to the mark, Sylvester. That's your fault—now, there is Joe Lanigan. I know him well. I know he would sell soul and body for a trifle beyant market price, if the priests cursed him till they broke their hearts. Others too have their weak side as well as them. Pooh ! you are not the knowing boy I took you for—

How did you ever come to nine and twenty years of age, without knowing that every man has his price?"

"If that be so," quickly replied his guest, "name yours, and you shall have it."

"Never mind me now," said Dillon. "Let me see how you succeed with some of the neighbours, and then I will be the better judge if it would be worth my while to be talking to you."

"Can't you try me at once?" persisted Fogarth. "Perhaps you will find my purse to be longer than you expect."

"Mr. Fogarth," said Margaret, "don't you see how my father is only joking? You could never suppose that a man of his understanding would disgrace himself by selling his country and his religion for money! not taking into count the sin of false-swear<sup>ing</sup> on a book, that never ought to be done, but under the direction of them who can explain when it is right, and when it is wrong."

"Don't take me up so serious, Miss Dillon. It's all a joke from beginning to end. Why should I offer any man money for his vote, when he is ready to give it for nothing? and I may as well tell you the truth at once," he continued, turning to Dillon, "close as you are, I saw

your intention so plain from the beginning, that I passed my word for you to Lord Clanerris, not more than a fortnight ago."

"No," said Simon, with a knowing look. "You were too wise for that. You only promised to flatter me; or to talk sense to me; or to come round me some way or other. But time will tell, what we will all do. In the mean while, I will follow the example of my superiors. I will give you the same answer my landlady returned to Sir Andrew—'my mind is not made up.'—Besides, an't all the world crying shame upon tenants for going again their landlords? and would you have me promise my vote, without knowing what side Miss Fiddy favours?"

"Oh! nonsense about Miss Fiddy!" exclaimed Fogarth. "You are independent of her good will. You have a lease for her life, and she won't die a minute sooner than she can help it, to vex you. The whole end of the matter is this, without more joking; I expect you to stand my friend, this turn. You have it in your power to serve me, without loss to yourself—no—but to your own advantage, in more ways than one—You can guess what I mean. I cannot get on without you: for, would the Bindons, do you think, ever employ me again, in such an-

ther job, if I could not manage so near a friend of mine, as you are to be one of these days?"

"The Bindons day is over," replied Dillon, gravely. "They will never tyrannize over the country again; and you might have done as well for your own interest, had you shewed yourself on the other side."

"I can't afford to do business for nothing," he answered; "and I believe it's poor wages the priests will give their underlings, with all their fine promises. At all events, whatever may be the end of the Bindons, they are able to pay well now; and they will pay better, if I am able to draw over a man of your influence to their interest."

"That's out of the question, once and for all, Mr. Fogarth," said Margaret. "My father would no more vote for them than he would cut off his head."

"Oh, Miss Dillon!" pleaded Sylvester, in his most silky tone, "don't you encourage him to injure my prospects; for, what am I working so hard for?—Is it love to the Bindons, do you think?"

"I am no great judge of policy," she answered; "nor do I think it turns out always to a man's advantage. I allow, indeed, that it does not

look so bad in one of your profession to side with the enemies of Ireland, if you can gain by it honestly—but, it is not to be thought of, that my father would disgrace himself and his pedigree, while the country is looking up to him, and the like of him, to shew a good example. And, I must say, Mr. Fogarth, if you have the wish for him and his family that you always professed, you will never introduce such discourse for the future. It may come to the ears of others, and it would not tell to the credit of either."

"Drop your fine norations, Miss," said her father, crossly. "You are too glib at the tongue, and too fond of interfering in my business. If you learn upsettingness from Mr. Gurteen, I will give you both a pulling down, I promise you. Go bring me my pipe: after that you may get ready the tay-tackle—and then try your hand at discourse more fitting your capacity."

Margaret obeyed in silence; and Sylvester, exerting himself to be agreeable, soon succeeded in restoring the good humour which had received a little check towards the close of the preceding conversation.

## CHAPTER VI.

As the time for the election drew nigh, Miss Dickinson's consequence was hourly increasing. The contending interests were so nicely balanced, that a feather might turn the scale; consequently all eyes were directed to her and her four votes, two of which being in the possession of Protestants, were certain to be at her disposal; and, even Simon Dillon, who, under certain circumstances might be supposed likely to run restive, so resolutely protested against committing himself till his landlady spoke out, that it was suspected he meant to accede to her wishes, whatever they might be. The lady still maintained a profound silence respecting her intentions. To every application or inquiry, she invariably returned the same answer, that "she had passed her promise to Terasa, from the very first, not to make up her mind till all the candidates were declared; and that then, she would decide according to the best of her

ability, without advising with mortal—only,” she generally added, “that maybe I may open my mind to Mr. Barrymore, who, besides being a humane man, and well spoken of by far and near, is one that knows very little about this world.”

Much, however, as she enjoyed her consequence at finding herself so unexpectedly an object of such intense interest to the county at large, yet, it brought with it some little inconveniences which gave her no small annoyance. Somebody, she soon discovered, must be disengaged, while she would gladly have obliged every body in the world, except, perhaps, the Knights of Derryfane. Then she really wished to act conscientiously, but her conscience was, unluckily, in this instance, in the keeping of so many persons of the most different creeds, both in religion and in politics, that she could seldom consult it calmly and dispassionately. While speaking to Miss Hamilton and other Conservatives, she was almost convinced that the interest of her blood relation, Sir Andrew, should be sacrificed to the public good; but on consulting with the subordinate members of her household, and hearing from them that the curse of the poor would light upon all that upheld the Orange faction, her conscience, at least

she thought it conscience—would take alarm; so that often on such occasions, she felt so disheartened, as to be almost determined to retire from public life, and leave her tenants to their own unbiassed inclinations.

These fits of despondency, however, were of short continuance. The question, “What will Miss Fiddy and her four votes do?” which, she was assured by Abby Sessnan, Tom Mullaheeran, and Naty Foody, was the only question that was asked from morning till night in the whole parish of Innisraymond, though it sometimes elicited from her a pettish ejaculation, or, a little moral reflection, addressed to her kitchen cronies, on the troubles and torments attendant upon an estate like Ardcarnacarrihy; yet, in general, she was able to summon up sufficient courage to look all her difficulties in the face, by the resolution to act so civilly and genteely towards all parties, that even those, who must be refused, should not be offended.

What caused her the greatest uneasiness, was the daily expectation, of a visit from Sir Andrew; but, fortunately for her peace of mind, she was saved from this annoyance by a severe fit of the gout with which he was seized, just as he was preparing for a canvassing excursion

to the neighbourhood of Oranard. His application to her was, therefore, made by letter, in the most cousinly style. He reminded her of the near connection between their families—of the unanimity of sentiment subsisting from time immemorial, between the houses of Shriveltown and Ardcarnacarrighy—slightly glancing at the efforts which would be made at this juncture, to disunite old and attached friends, and concluding by expressing the fullest confidence, that she would be among the number of his firmest supporters.

This composition was exceedingly admired by Miss Dickinson. It was read, and re-read, and commented upon in terms of the warmest approbation ; and, at last, pronounced to be so feeling, and friendly, and true, that it would be very difficult indeed to answer it in a manner sufficiently grateful. Teresa, though trembling for the sake of the four votes, while it was under consideration, wisely abstained from volunteering any advice, or hazarding an opinion, being well aware that in the present state of Miss Fiddy's feelings, the slightest appearance of impartiality to Sir Andrew, might have the effect of establishing him more firmly in her favour. She therefore listened complacently to all the praises

so lavishly bestowed on him, and when applied to for her contribution of applause was enabled, with perfect truth to eulogize his handwriting as being remarkably legible. The answer, however, which devolved upon her, was a delicate and difficult undertaking. The matter was to be worded by Miss Dickinson, but the arrangement was left to her own discretion.

“I rely upon you Terasa, to word it in so proper a way that Sir Andrew need not be ashamed of it; for, a gentleman that can write so polite and friendly ought to be treated in the same way. You can say, that, though it is out of my power to promise him my four votes, at this present minute, for the reasons he knows, yet, that there is not a man living, that I would oblige before him—and, indeed, Terasa, that is nothing but the truth; as, I hope, time will shew. After that, you may say, that barring yourself, the Shrivels are, to the best of my knowledge, the nearest relations I have in this world; though I am not clear whether my grandmother was first or second cousin to his great grandfather—but I suppose, he knows. Then, you can bring it in, how I always considered Shriveltown a very handsome place. Then you can put down my best respects to Lady Shrivell,

and your own too, Terasa—for your name is wrote in full, just after mine, which I look upon as a great compliment both to myself, and to you Terasa. Well!—What next?—I bleeve that's all; only to end it like any other polite letter; wishing him every success from the bottom of my heart, which, I give you my word, Terasa, is only his due from me, considering not alone his own civility to myself, but the intimacy that was at all times between the two families of the Shrivels and the Dickinsons.

After innumerable corrections, alterations, and revisions, the answer was at length completed. Miss Dickinson was perfectly satisfied as to its civility—in fact, Teresa had contrived that nothing could be more unmeaningly civil—and she complimented her amanuensis on the elegance of her style, which she assured her was not inferior to the finest letters in the Spectator. But she thought there were some deficiencies, which might still be remedied. Very little was said about the family connection—less again about the beauties of Shriveltown, and nothing at all about wishing him success—the expressions of her personal kindness being limited to the hope of his speedy recovery from the gout. Teresa, however, after explaining the meaning

which one or two sentences might bear, succeeded in convincing her that she was as affectionate as she could be under existing circumstances ; and persuaded her to send the letter at once, with all its perfections and imperfections on its head, to Shriveltown.

When Sir Andrew's messenger was despatched, Miss Dickinson sat down to rest her mind, which had been on the stretch for some hours ; and she confessed to her young friend, that, without her assistance, she would have found it difficult to manage so very delicate an affair, as that which had occupied them during the morning.

“ And, indeed, it is a great pity, she continued, “ that the parliament cant be settled, without so much trouble to them that dont care one straw about it. Now, here am I, a lone woman, getting as much pestering, as if I wanted to be a parliament man myself ; and what good do I ever expect to get by it, if even my own relation is chaired ? I give you my word Terasa, I'm just sick of it—If there was to be an election once a month, I dont think I could outlive the third, or maybe, the fourth at the most. At any rate, a load is taken away from my heart, now that Sir Andrew has got so well-wrote an

answer to satisfy him,—and I hope myself and my unfortunate four votes will get a little rest for the remainder of this day, at least; for, there's no use in denying it, but I am fairly bothered."

But more bothering awaited her. The words were hardly spoken, when Captain Bindon and Mr. Sylvester Fogarth were announced; and these gentlemen were not firmly seated on their chairs, till Mr. Ambrosse was added to the party. Miss Dickinson, though taken by surprise recovered her spirits in a moment. She was fond of receiving visits, particularly from genteel people; and even the consciousness, that she might thank her troublesome four votes for the honor conferred upon her at this time, did not diminish the gratification she felt by the attention of two such exalted personages. Captain Bindon to whom she directed her first civilities, as well on account of his priority of entrance, as his rank, made a very favourable impression on her, by a manner and bearing which rendered him tolerably unpopular in his own county. He was a fastidiously-proud man, who could not unbend,—or, if he attempted an easy manner with those whom he considered his inferiors, instead of conciliating, he always contrived to give

offence: and those, who would have excused or overlooked his stately reserve, or, who were content to stand on their own ground, whatever that might be, leaving him in undisturbed possession of his own, resented his familiarity, as a kind of insult.

He was this day in a particularly unconciliating kind of humour, having met with insolence—or what he felt as insolence—in various shapes, graduating from the shuffling excuse, down to the unqualified refusal; and that from persons, whose “sweet voices” had heretofore prevented his solicitation. Besides, he was writhing under the vulgar officiousness and patronizing airs of Fogarth, whose talents as an electioneerer were rated very high by Lord Clanerris—and he certainly was of use, for he could play first or second fiddle as occasion required; he could talk when Captain Bindon’s voice stuck in his throat, and manœuvre a very skilful retreat, when the other, if left to his own resources, would have been ignominiously beat out of the field. In short, Captain Bindon was obliged to tolerate him as a necessary evil: and as misery makes strange bed fellows, so dire necessity, nothing short of great misery to the morbidly sensitive man of fashion, made him submit to the gig-companionship of Sylvester even for one day.

By Fogarth's recommendation he was prepared to favour Miss Dickinson with rather a longer visit than the usual canvassing call, and he was warned to be somewhat lively in his manner, not to look high, or to go away too abruptly, even if the lady's answer was not decidedly favourable. Liveliness was out of the question, at all times, and the previous drilling, instead of exhilarating his spirits, rather threw a more chilling damp over them ; but as we mentioned before, Miss Dickinson approved of his stateliness, and felt that he treated her as a gentlewoman, when the introduction passed off on his part by a bow, without the least attempt at shaking hands.

And here, we cannot help expressing our surprise at what appears to us a want of tact, very generally evidenced in the mode of address adopted by gentlemen in Captain Bindon's situation—we allude to the practice of shaking hands with all and every person, whose vote is solicited, whether they be old friends, or the acquaintance of the moment. Certainly, so much may be said in excuse for it, that it is expected by a certain class, who regard it as a necessary part of good breeding, or a mark of gracious condescension ; and in those instances it would be churlish to withhold so cheap a favour, even

if popularity were not hazarded by any want of apparent courtesy. But there are cases where such buxom familiarity is quite out of place ; when it assumes too much the appearance of vulgar cajolary to be received as a compliment ; and where good sense and good feeling ought to dictate a different kind of behaviour. It will be allowed that the forms which regulate the intercourse between gentlemen should be as punctually observed on one occasion, as another ; and according to the common usage of society, a first introduction between strangers is seldom accompanied by any extraordinary out-breakings of kindness, unless some pre-disposing circumstances have paved the way for a mutual cordiality, which will not be likely to evaporate when their backs are turned on each other.

Then, supposing the introduction to take place for the avowed purpose of one of the parties having a favour to ask of the other, the expectant should assuredly be the most backward of the two. At all events, he should wait till he has something like an excuse for being rampantly civil. Altogether the practice, as bearing upon those who are in the rank of gentlemen, and who may be supposed to have the feelings of such, would be more honored in the breach

than in the observance ; for we are convinced that nine out of every ten, in such circumstances, would much prefer the common courtesy which appears to consider them as entitled to a certain degree of respect, before the hail-fellow-well-met salutation, which places them in a very equivocal situation, as well as regards understanding, as grade in society. In this, however, as in most other cases, it is impossible to afford a general rule which will square with every emergency. Much must be left to the discrimination of the individual who has to undergo the ordeal of a county canvass ; but a person possessed of a little common observation, will, at a glance, take measure of his man ; he will, at least, form a good guess of how much or how little may be expected from him in the way of blandishment, and he will act accordingly.

We would not have it supposed that we recommend a starched formality that might be construed into superciliousness, or any other unpopular quality. On the contrary, we think a frank, easy, unpretending manner, if *natural*, very desirable, on such occasions. Neither would we curtail a single smile, or one of the other hundred little harmless and becoming artifices, which may be practised with considerable

effect, under judicious management—such as, kind inquiries after Mrs. —, and a due share of attention to the fine, interesting children, who let it be remembered as a rule, to which there is positively no exception—are always one or the other; for if they are a pack of forward, ugly, troublesome imps, they come, under the denomination of fine in the parents' vocabulary; and if they are a poor, sneaking, ill-thriven set, they are as indubitably, interesting. Indeed no remarkable skill is required in conducting this branch of the business. We shall not particularize other trifling matters, but at once sum up our admonitory hints with this caution, that while the great aim should be to have the thing well done, the fact should not be lost sight of, that it may be overdone.

To return to our story.—Captain Bindon, though the first in the field, was forestalled by Mr. Ambrosse, who immediately on his entrance, came to the point; and on the score of old acquaintanceship, and for other reasons, which he said there was no occasion then to specify, hoped for the honor and favor of her support and interest at the coming election. The lady, in return, acknowledged the acquaintance, and all the unspecified etceteras, and expressed great

pleasure in seeing him in such good health, which she assured him was a sign nothing bad could be the matter with him.

“ But, indeed, Mr. Ambrosse,” she continued, “ I am sorry about them four votes of mine, that, I could not promise to my poor father, if he was standing there; for I passed my word to a friend when the talk first began about elections that I would not make up my mind till I could hear who was likely to stand; for fear I might be sorry if my conscience gave me a check after.”

“ I did myself the honour of waiting upon you for the same purpose as my friend Mr. Ambrosse,” said Captain Bindon; “ but I suppose I cannot expect a more decided answer than he has received. I hope, however, that it may not be more unfavourable.”

“ You may assure yourself, Sir,” she replied, “ that it will not. I would wish to be as favourable as I could to two gentlemen of your breeding: but, you know, Sir, my word is my word; and you, I am sure, would be the last to advise me to go back of it.”

“ Certainly! decidedly!” said Mr. Ambrosse, who was an old electioneerer; and besides, well acquainted with her weak points. “ Captain Bin-

don and myself respect your conscientious adherence to your word too much, to wish you to act contrary to it ; and, indeed, I regard it as very fortunate for us, that you have taken time for consideration, being pretty confident that we shall reap the benefit of it."

" I assure you, Sir, it would only give me pleasure to hear of any thing to your benefit, every day in the week ; and I said the very same thing to Sir Andrew, in a letter, not passing half an hour ago, when I returned my excuse for not gratifying him at once, as my inclination would be to do."

" Oh ! but, Miss Fiddy !" cried Fogarth, " you know Sir Andrew is on the wrong side."

" Sir," said the heiress of Ardcarnacarrighy, drawing herself up to a more than usual perpendicularity, " I don't set up to be a judge of right or wrong sides ; I leave that to my betters. All I know is, that Sir Andrew is descended from an ancient stock, and is my blood-relation by my grandmother."

" There cannot be a more excellent, worthy man than Sir Andrew Shrivel," interposed Mr. Ambrosse. " I have a great regard for him, though opposed to him just now. But, Miss Dickinson, you are acting unfairly by yourself,

when you say you do not understand the difference between right and wrong in politics. Surely, a person of your information must know the difference between the Whigs, and Tories, and Radicals?"

" I give you my word, Mr. Ambrosse, I do not. I know two of them are in the history of England, where they gave trouble enough, whatever they were. But as for the Radicals, it is a newspaper word that I can't say I'm well acquainted with. Perhaps, if it was not asking too great a favour, you would explain the meaning of them all."

" Captain Bindon could give you fuller information concerning the Whigs than I can," he answered. " All I can say for them is that they are very fair spoken, when it suits their convenience. But the Radicals are a foul-mouthed race, on all and every occasion ; and are the bitter enemies to church and state. The Tories, on the contrary, are the true friends of both ; they are loyal, constitutional, straightforward, honest men."

" At that rate, . Sir," she answered, " as far as my poor judgment goes, I would say that, bad as the name is—and indeed, it is a very ugly one—I would rather let myself be called fifty

Tories, than confess a leaning to them Radicals."

" That is more than Sir Andrew would say for himself," said Fogarth ; " for he is the head of the Radicals in this county ; and it is only on their interest that he can ever hope to be returned."

" It may be so, for anything I know to the contrary," she replied, with increasing stateliness ; " and it would be no wonder if a gentleman of his descent would have plenty of interest, if he was at the trouble of asking for it."

Mr. Ambrosse made a sign to Fogarth to be silent, as the lady evidently disliked his pert interference ; and he, rather than act the part of nobody, in any scene of the drama, in which a very prominent part, as he conceived, had been allotted to him, commenced a flirting kind of conversation with Teresa Hamilton, which he kept up during the remainder of the visit, though his attentions were received with a coldness that would have chilled into silence any tolerably moderate degree of assurance.

In the mean time Mr. Ambrosse was gaining rapid ground in Miss Dickinson's good graces.

" I perfectly understand you," he said, in answer to a very civil speech from her. " I quite

enter into your feelings. I think you act wisely, and, I am sure, so does my friend Captain Bindon"—here the Captain bowed assenting—"in keeping yourself disengaged, till you see who is likely to offer. The best man should be the best supported, and if a more eligible person than myself should offer to-morrow, I am ready to resign at once in his favour."

"Sir, you may believe me, I do not think a better man, or one more likely to give satisfaction nor yourself, could be found, if you were to search the three counties: and I beg of you to consider it well, before you give up your right and title to any body in the world."

"Thank you a thousand times for your good opinion. I was perfectly confident that I should meet a friend here, though disappointment has met me in other places. When speaking of you to Mrs. Ambrosse, last night, I said, that, independently of our long acquaintance, which gave me a strong claim to your regard, I knew that you would never support the enemies of the constitution."

"You are really too good, Sir, and so is Mrs. Ambrosse. And, indeed, Sir, you only did me justice; for there is nothing on the face of this earth I dislike so much as enemies. I morally

hate them, Sir: and I am happy to say that I don't think I have an enemy in the world, barring one family, that I don't want to say much about."

"The enemies of the constitution," he continued, with great gravity, "are yours and mine, whatever professions they may make. The world, Miss Dickinson, is going headlong to destruction; and unless such persons as you, with influence and property, resolutely stem the torrent, there is no saying what may be the consequence. I have represented this county for upwards of thirty years, with, I believe, the approbation of all the respectable part of it: and I hope I shall again; though the Radicals, and all the other bitter enemies of Church and State, are making every effort against me."

"Sir, I hope they may be disappointed. You may believe me, I do: for it would be a terrible pity, if a gentleman like you, who can count forefathers, would come to misfortune. Family, in my mind, Sir, ought to have the first preference; and so, I have always said; and so I will say to the end of my days."

Captain Bindon, who began to be rather amused at this dialogue, felt so much returning animation as enabled him to venture taking part in it.

“ Although I cannot personally,” he began, “ advert to long services, like my friend, Mr. Ambrosse, “ still, I may be permitted to advance some claim to consideration on family grounds. We have, for a series of years had the honor of representing this county in parliament, and I should hope that the short trial which has been made of me, will not be likely to lessen the influence which we always possessed heretofore.”

“ The whole world, Sir,” replied Miss Dickinson, “ knows your family; and you express yourself so remarkable well, that I assure you it would grieve me to see another step into your shoes.”

“ I may hope, then,” he said hesitatingly, “ for your —

“ You may, indeed, Sir,” she answered, without waiting to hear the object of his hope. “ I would consider it very unbecoming not to wish well to a gentleman, who speaks so polite; and from the bottom of my heart I wish you success.”

“ As Captain Bindon and I are joined in the same cause,” said Mr. Ambrosse, “ I suppose I may also expect your kind feelings and friendly wishes in my behalf,

“ You have them, Sir ; you may take my word for it you have ; nothing could give me greater pleasure than to hear of your health and happiness, and good luck every way.”

Both gentlemen returned due acknowledgments, which were repaid by still more ardent protestations of good will ; and Fogarth who was well nigh tired of playing the agreeable to one who seemed determined not to be pleased, suddenly rallied his spirits, and winking knowingly at Miss Hamilton, said,

“ Isn’t that Ambrosse a clever fellow at the trade ? You see how he has wheedled old Miss Fiddy, till she is ready to jump down their throats. However, she will want more tickling before she is fairly bagged, and remember, we expect you to put in a good word for us. I can tell you, we look upon you as our sheet-anchor here ; for, sly as you are, we all know what stuff you are made of.

“ Sir ! ! !” answered Teresa, with a look meant to express unutterable things.

But whatever its meaning might convey, it was lost upon Sylvester : for, the Captain and Mr. Ambrosse were making their last bows, before he had quite finished his speech, and he was obliged to hurry off rather ungracefully, in order to do the honours of the gig.

“ Terasa, said Miss Dickinson, when the door closed upon the trio, “ if you never seen it before, you see it now—the differ between rale and mock gentlemen. I wouldn’t disparage a dog, if it had manners, which you may believe me, Terasa, some dogs have ; but as for that Fogarth, old Biddy Doolaghan’s grandson, I give you my word, a little edication would not be much out of his way, if he wants to set up for a gentleman.”

## CHAPTER VII.

DURING the busy period which our story embraces, Lady Clanerris was the busiest of the busy in her exertions to forward her son's interest. She had not much talent of any kind, but she was useful in her way, by helping to smooth down some little difficulties which she had mainly originated, and were likely to interfere with Captain Bindon's prospects of success. She was what is called a woman of the world—a very comprehensive designation, including more particulars than we are competent to specify. One of them, however, we shall mention, being that which was most developed during her Ladyship's visits to Ireland. It consists in making use of all kinds of people, according as they may be turned to account; and, vice versa, making no use at all of them, where no advantage is expected from them. Now, the neighbourhood of Kilronan Park, though very superior in point of society to many or most parts of Ireland, was composed of

persons who would be absolute nobodys in London ; consequently, not only perfectly useless to Lady Clanerris, but likely to be very oppressive burdens if any thing approaching to intimacy was permitted between them. She therefore kept them all at arm's length ; and, if not absolutely rude, was sufficiently explicit as to the very low estimation in which she held them. As might naturally be expected, such vaulting, and over-leaping ambition—for in that light her assumption of super-finery was regarded by the gentry of old families and respectable fortunes—was resented, with perhaps deeper displeasure than the offence merited ; particularly as it was whispered that the Viscountess Clanerris, though a very great personage in her own country, was merely second-rate, if indeed, so much, in London,—that she was considered in the first circles, or circle there, to be very much in the style of the celebrated Lady Clonbrony of “ I big your pawdon” memory ; and that, after years of hard pushing, and patient endurance of sharp rebuffs, she had not yet been able to force her way farther than to what may be called the debateable ground of the fashionable world. Lord Clanerris and the young people came in for their full share of her Ladyship's unpopularity, not it must be confessed

without giving cause for it in their own persons ; by which means the Bindon interest, once very powerful, had sunk so low in the county, that if any Conservative had started in opposition to them, many of their staunchest supporters in former times, were prepared to whistle them to the winds, and let them prey at fortune.

To remedy her past errors, which had led to such unforeseen and unpleasant consequences, Lady Clanerris put every engine within her reach in motion ; and she in a great measure succeeded. Her manners were good ; at least they could be so when she chose ; and there are few in the middle walk of life so sturdily constituted as to be able to hold out long against the persevering courteousness of a person of rank, particularly when no sacrifice is required but that of a proud and unconciliatory disposition. Two or three families were thus won over after a very slight resistance ; two or three others were rapidly thawing ; but the Priors, the most influential of all, were impracticable. This sulky perseverance in ill-humour was not merely troublesome, it was also alarming as to future consequences that might attend it ; for, although any fear of opposition from them, was, at this time done away, by the active part which Mr.

Prior and his sons took on Captain Bindon's behalf; yet, there were some grounds for apprehension, lest, in the event of another election, a competitor for the representation of the county, might come forward, in the person of Sir Manby Rutherford, nephew to Mrs. Prior, a young man of fortune, lately come of age; and, in that case, unless a thorough reconciliation could be now effected, the Bindons' interest might be lost to them for ever. It was therefore of the greatest consequence to regain their good will, at whatever cost it might be purchased; and, to do Lady Clanerris justice, she was prepared to say, to do, and to suffer any thing in the course of the undertaking.

As Mrs. Prior and her daughters had not called at Kilronan Park, since her last return from England, her first advances were necessarily confined to kind inquiries and civil messages, which, if reported or delivered, appeared to make very little impression, being unproductive of any visiting results. She next ventured, on the present of a Westphalian ham, which was graciously received, and duly acknowledged; but, as in the case of the old song, "eaten bread is soon forgotten," so it fared with the ham. It was eaten; at least, so we suppose; and still, no

grateful recollections of the donor were awakened. These distant attacks having exhausted all her artillery for that kind of warfare, without any impression being made, she courageously resolved to come to close quarters with the enemy, by invading them on their own ground; and accordingly, when they least expected such a design, supported by two daughters, she stormed Prior Abbey, in a chariot and four, with two postilions and two out-riders. The ladies were not at home. They were literally and bona fide out of the house; but the desired effect was produced. The visit was returned the day but one after by a gathering of all the Priors, with the addition of Sir Manby Rutherford, and two other gentlemen, then staying at the Abbey.

“ Maria,” said Lady Clanerris to Miss Bindon, as she saw from the windows the cavalcade, in long procession, moving up the approach, “ go to your papa’s study, and tell him that the Priors are coming; then desire Anne to come here immediately; and remember that you are both to be particularly attentive to the Miss Priors. Talk to them of horses, as I understand they ride remarkably well. In fact, talk to them of any thing, no matter what; and shake hands with old Mr. Prior, and ask him if he found his

spectacle case. He likes those little attentions."

The parties met as if they had always been on the best possible terms, without any constraint of manner on either side to throw an awkwardness over their first salutations. Lady Clanerris introduced her third daughter, a young lady not yet come out, to Mrs. Prior; and in return Mrs. Prior introduced her second daughter, who had already come out, to Lady Clanerris, which called forth many expressions of surprise from both ladies, at the wonderful change in the appearance of the young people since they had seen them last.

" Yet, on recollection," said Mrs. Prior, " I believe I never have had the pleasure of seeing Miss Emily Bindon before; at least it must have been when she was a baby in arms."

" Is it possible!" exclaimed her Ladyship,— " Can it be so long ago? But really, years do pass over so quickly. It appears to me to be an occurrence of yesterday, that we celebrated Miss Fanny Prior's sixth birth-day at Kilronan Park. Do you remember making a speech on the occasion?" she asked the young lady with one of her most amiable smiles.

The young lady endeavoured to recollect a cir-

cumstance that did her so much honor. But she was in the end obliged to confess that the lapse of fourteen years had quite obliterated it from her memory.

“ Hush ! hush !” she exclaimed, playfully approaching her hand to the fair demurrer’s lips, “ I protest on my own account against the accuracy of your dates. They would absolutely make me an old woman. Mrs. Prior, I hope you will be equally indignant with my young people, if they venture to remind you of so unconscionable a number of years.”

“ My insignificance is my safe-guard against such danger,” answered Mrs. Prior. “ I am perfectly invulnerable to attacks from that quarter. It would be very difficult, indeed impossible, for the Miss Bindons, to fix upon any era connected with me, that could be worth finding a place in their memories.”

This speech was intended to be very *pointed*. If it was so, Lady Clanerris did not appear to feel the point. Without wincing, she continued in the same playful tone. “ Oh ! do not trust them. They have excellent memories, and are, I assure you, very mischievously accurate in their recollections of past times.”

“ Emily,” called Lord Clanerris to his youngest

daughter, when the ladies had seated themselves, “ come here. Prior, look at this girl—I call her my grandmother. Don’t you think she is very like your aunt, the late Lady Clane-  
rris ?”

Mr. Prior made a long pause, not so much for the purpose of examining the young Lady’s features, as to make up his mind whether to swallow the cajolery with becoming suavity, or to reject it at once with the bluff sincerity most natural to him. He adopted a middle course, and answered coldly. “ There may be some likeness. The eyes are of the same colour, and there is the same fall in the shoulders.”

“ Some likeness ! My dear Prior, where are your eyes ? Nothing can be more like your family. She is much more of a Prior than a Bindon.”

“ I fear you will not receive that as a compliment to your personal appearance, Miss Emily,” said Mr. Prior, good naturedly, to the really pretty girl before him. “ However, I can tell you, for your comfort, that your great grandmother was a very handsome woman ; and the more I look at you, the more I think you resemble her.”

Emily blushed, laughed, and retired to the

other end of the room ; and Lord Clanerris, though he left harping on his daughter, still continued to harp on his grandmother, as the most interesting subject with which he could entertain his visitor.

“ What a wonderful favourite you were with her Ladyship. My father was at times seriously afraid that she would have left the Clonarrat estate to you.”

“ No, not seriously, my Lord. If he had the slightest apprehension on the subject, I should have been the first to whom he would have mentioned it ; he felt the affection of a brother for me, and it was returned with equal warmth on my part.”

“ I am perfectly sensible of it. He knew how to choose his friends, and was seldom disappointed. By the bye,” he added, “ how he would have grieved, had he lived to see the present state of public affairs.”

“ Yes, he would have felt like every man of sense and principle ; but he would have had the consolation of reflecting that he had not lent a helping hand to the measure which has mainly produced it.”

“ Spare me, Prior, spare me. I am at your mercy there. I acknowledge it was a most un-

fortunate measure. You will, however, confess that wiser heads than mine were mistaken as to its effects."

"Heads, my Lord, had very little to do with the measure. It was intirely an affair of the heart. You all fell in love with the scarlet lady. In your case, perhaps, it was only a Platonic affection ; at least, I hope so."

"Sir Manby," said Lord Clanerris, "I request you will come to my assistance. Mr. Prior is too severe upon me. He would endeavour to persuade me that I am more than half a convert to Popery, because I advocated Catholic Emancipation."

"I shall but badly help on your Lordship's cause," said the Baronet ; "for my uncle's opinion of me is far from favourable. There is not a crime in his catalogue of deadly political sins that he has not, from time to time, accused me of. He calls me by very ugly names, I assure you."

"I never called you a papist," said Mr. Prior. "In fact, I never called you any thing. I may have said that you are half Whig, half Tory in politics, a Radical in religion, and an expediency man in every thing ; but, you belong to a genus as yet un-named."

“ Your Lordship must not take my character from my uncle. If he described me fairly, he would be obliged to confess that the head and front of my offending consists in not being a violent glorious-and-immortal-memory man.”

“ Jesting apart,” said Mr. Prior, nodding his head very significantly, “ the greatest fault I have to find with you is, that you are every thing by starts, and nothing long. Still as you have some good principles and more good feelings, I am inclined to hope that you will improve in time.”

Lady Clanerris, who had till now entirely devoted herself to Mrs. Prior, came forward to promote a more general conversation.

“ Lord Clanerris,” she began, “ Mrs. Prior has been telling me a very sad story. You remember Mr. Clifden, that very pleasing, cheerful old clergyman, who called here the other day. Could you believe it? He has been obliged to part with almost every article of furniture, to provide the commonest necessities for his family !”

“ Very distressing, indeed !” said Lord Clanerris—“ Exceedingly unpleasant it must be to be reduced to such extremities.”

“ I took quite a fancy to him,” she continued

—“he was so very gentlemanlike and unassuming. I never could have supposed from his appearance and manner that he was in the slightest distress. Would you approve Mrs. Prior, of setting forward a little subscription for him? I shall be most happy to contribute my mite towards it.”

“At present,” answered Mrs. Prior, “it is not necessary. I have reason for believing that some assistance has been sent to him, in a manner not likely to wound his feelings. Unfortunately,” she added, “his is not a peculiar case. There are many suffering as great, if not greater privations.”

“That the clergy must experience considerable inconvenience from the non-payment of tithe, I can readily conceive,” said Lord Clanerris; “and no doubt, in a few instances, the inconvenience may amount to absolute distress,—but I am inclined to hope, that on the whole, their sufferings have been much exaggerated.”

“I am of the same opinion,” said Sir Manby. “A great outcry is often raised about their privations, without any adequate cause. For instance, a neighbouring clergyman had to sell his plate, and the circumstance was spoken of as a grievance of the most intolerable nature. Now,

I really cannot see the great hardship of being obliged to eat with a steel fork, instead of a silver one."

" I believe the hardship complained of," said Mrs. Prior, " was the absence of the eatable, not the material that conveyed it to the mouth."

" I never could understand the necessary connection between religion and silver forks," continued the Baronet. " The apostles were not clothed in purple and fine linen, nor did they fare sumptuously every day, yet they were very useful clergymen, who did not parade their poverty to the commiseration of the world."

" Very true," said Lady Clanerris, " and I am far from arguing in favour of luxuries. I should merely recommend a competence. I am sure you will allow that a clergyman should have the means of not only supporting himself and family, in a respectable kind of way, but also a little surplus, to relieve the wants of the poor."

" I allow the force of your Ladyship's argument. But what security have we that the surplus shall be so dedicated? I am not very well acquainted with Ireland, having seldom resided for three months together in it, I therefore cannot speak of the general character of the clergy from much personal experience."

“ In that case,” said Mr. Prior, “ had you not better talk of something else? It is not doing justice to yourself to discuss matters of which you confess entire ignorance.”

“ I know,” said Sir Manby, with great good-humour, “ that I shall have to bide the pelting of a pitiless storm from Mr. Prior, for breathing a hint against the established clergy: however, I have gone so far, that it would be cowardice to recede. I was saying to your Ladyship, that my personal experience of their character is limited, but I have had some, which has not prejudiced me in their favour. About a month ago, a poor woman was seized with fever, in passing through the parish in which I reside. She could get no place to shelter her, but the back of a ditch on the road-side, where a sort of booth was erected over her, to protect her from the inclemency of the weather; and I assure you, there she was permitted to remain till she recovered, though the glebe house was within half a quarter of a mile, and the clergyman passed the road two or three times in a week.”

“ That was shocking neglect, I confess,” said Lady Clanerris. “ He must be a peculiarly hard-hearted person.”

“ On the contrary,” said Mr. Prior, “ I can

vouch for his being a remarkably humane man, who gave full proof of his humanity by the most unremitting attention to the poor woman, whose case has been so pathetically described by Sir Manby Rutherford. That no better lodging than the booth by the road-side could be procured is not to be laid to his neglect, as he could not prevail upon any person to receive her as a lodger. And your Ladyship must be told, that kind-hearted as our peasantry proverbially are, yet their dread of fever is so great, that scarcely any persuasion, backed by money, will induce them to receive an infected person into their houses."

" Could not some empty house have been procured, as a temporary hospital ?" asked the Baronet.

" None whatever, except within the demesne walls of Manby Grange ; where the sick woman could have been comfortably accommodated, without putting the owner to trouble, expense, or inconvénience of any kind. But, the application, if I am rightly informed, was rejected."

" I had no idea," said Sir Manby, colouring high with something very like anger, " of submitting to that kind of imposition. The proper authorities should be compelled to do their duty."

“ I recommend you not to repeat that interesting story again,” said Mr. Prior ; “ it will tell against yourself. For impertinently curious people may inquire what your benevolence prompted you to perform on the occasion ; and the answer would be rather awkward if it turned out to be —just nothing at all.”

“ Your uncle could, and would give a very different answer,” said Mrs. Prior, addressing Sir Manby, whose brow was fast wrinkling into a frown—“ for, although you have not trumpeted your good deeds, their report has already reached Prior Abbey. You are, however, aware that you must expect no quarter from him while you are so hostile to the Established Church.”

“ Not to the church itself.” he said. “ I am one of its most attached friends. My hostility is directed solely against its abuses.”

“ Attack them as much as you please,” said Mr. Prior, “ only, let it be done in an honorable manner, not by insinuating charges against individuals, which a little inquiry would prove to be unfounded. The flippant tattle of ignorance is as baneful in its effects as the deeper malevolence of wilful misrepresentation. I made the experiment of the latter against you this moment, and your character for benevolence would

have been irretrievably and most unjustly lost in the opinion of Lord and Lady Clanerris had not your aunt come forward in your defence."

"I was not conscious of *insinuating* any thing," said Sir Manby. "I think I spoke out very plainly; and am still of opinion that some of the exorbitant wealth of the Established Church should be allotted to the relief of the poor; and not left to the chance benevolence of individuals to give or withhold as they please."

"From whatever fund it arises," said Lord Clanerris, "a legal provision for the poor of this country would be very desirable, if it could be managed judiciously.—Don't you think so?" speaking to Mr. Prior.

"Certainly, my Lord; and my only objection to making trial of some modification of the poor-rates to-morrow, is, the conviction, that the priests to whom the chief management of the funds would be committed, would contrive to put a good portion of them into their pockets."

"I have very little doubt," said Sir Manby, "of the appropriating propensities of those gentlemen. Some plan however might be adopted to keep them in check."

"Impossible. They possess a power over which we have no controul. Their dues would be

raised in proportion, as the means of the poor increased; and, though acts of parliament can rob the Protestant clergy, they cannot regulate the incomes of the Popish priests. Then, Sir Manby Rutherford should consider that his object would not be accomplished by the introduction of the poor laws into Ireland,—for, instead of putting an additional burden upon the established clergy, it would relieve them considerably. Of all classes of his Majesty's Irish subjects, they would be the most benefited by the system, as others must then bear their part of the burden, which now rests chiefly upon them."

Mr. Fogarth was announced,

"Are you acquainted with Mr. Fogarth?" inquired Miss Bindon of Miss Prior; being the third question she had asked since the visit commenced, with a tolerably long pause between each.

"No," replied Miss Prior. "Is he an acquaintance of yours?"

"Oh! no, I don't know him at all. He is employed by my brother in his electioneering business, and has dined here twice."

"I understand. But we have no business of that kind on hands, which is the reason, I suppose, that he has never dined with us."

"I don't know indeed.—Are you fond of riding?"

“ Not particularly—are you ?”

“ Not at all. I am too great a coward.”

Here occurred another very long pause, which was at length broken by Miss Prior, who now took the lead in questioning.

“ Do you like Ireland ?”

“ Oh ! no, I hate it. We all hate it. Don’t you ?”

“ No : I am very much attached to it.”

“ I wonder at that. I thought every body hated it.”

“ So they do, I assure you,” said Emily Bindon, who, we must premise, was but thirteen years of age. “ Mamma was quite afraid to let me come to Ireland, lest I should learn to speak with a brogue. She can’t bear any body that speaks with the least brogue. She says she quite shudders at the slightest sound of the brogue.”

Lady Clanerris was explaining to Mrs. Prior that the servant had made a mistake in shewing Fogarth into the drawing-room, when this speech reached her ears ; and apprehensive lest Miss Emily, if permitted the uncontrolled use of her tongue, might undesignedly betray more of her Irish antipathies than she wished to have known, suddenly broke in upon the conversation between

the young ladies—if conversation it could be called.

“ You have no idea, Miss Prior, what an inconvenience a good ear is. In Emily’s case, it is a downright misfortune. She is an absolute mock-bird, unconsciously acquiring every accent that she hears. So that I am obliged to watch her incessantly, lest she should speak like our Yorkshire footman, or Somersetshire house-maid.”

“ If she should unfortunately acquire the Irish brogue,” said Fanny Prior, “ I request your Ladyship to remember that I, at least, plead not guilty to the charge of corrupting her accent; as I have uttered but two monosyllables in her hearing, addressed to Miss Anne Bindon; and those spoken so softly, that they might be called murmurings, rather than distinct sounds.”

“ How unfortunate for Emily! she would have been so safe with you, who, literally, have no accent. I never knew a family like yours, whose country it would be so difficult to guess by your manner of speaking.”

An exclamation at this moment from Mr. Prior, in a tone that the dullest ear could not fail to recognize as very decidedly Hibernian, seemed maliciously intended to convict Lady Clanerris either of an error in judgment, or a

palpable disregard to truth. It was altogether so well, or so ill-timed, that his youngest daughter was nearly betrayed into a giggle, which she turned into a quick, short cough, so naturally got up, that Lady Clanerris became alarmed, lest she should have caught cold by throwing off her shawl ; and in the interest excited by this apprehension, the original subject of conversation was completely forgotten.

In the mean time, Mr. Prior had become intensely interested in Fogarth's communications. There was nothing he enjoyed like an election, and all the bustle connected with it. It was the element in which he had been reared ; and though a man of high principles in the main, yet when once fairly embarked in the business, they did not always save him from entering too much into the spirit of the manoeuvrings and double dealings practised by the subordinate agents. He disliked and despised Fogarth, and was more than half inclined to be affronted with Lord Clanerris, for asking him to sit down in his company,—yet, when he listened to the recital of his various tricks, and the success that followed some of them, his ill-humour gradually gave way. He asked questions, proposed expedients, answered objections, and congratulated Lord Clanerris on the brightening prospect of affairs.

“ There is nothing, my Lord, like exertion.—All hands must be employed—all heads must be busy—a few deserters more, and the day is our own.”

“ Any good news for Edward? inquired Lady Clanerris, advancing towards the gentlemen.

“ Excellent, Madam. Mr. Fogarth has been doing wonders, he has succeeded this morning in thinning Sir Andrew Shrivell’s ranks in spite of the priests.

“ You think you can depend upon those two Lanigans, that they will not be intimidated to retract their promises?” asked Lord Clanerris.

“ Quite sure of them, my Lord. I proved to them that it was their interest to vote with their landlord; and they are men who understand that kind of argument too well to be easily convinced to the contrary. They are stout fellows too; and their wives are so zealous on our side, that the husbands dare not draw back if they were inclined.”

“ I had well nigh forgot to ask what Miss Dickinson intends doing with her four votes,” said Mr. Prior. “ What answer did she give to Captain Bindon yesterday?”

“ She is dubious, Sir. She would make no

promise. It is easy to see her leaning is to Sir Andrew; but, from her manner to the Captain and Mr. Ambrosse, I think she could be inveigled into a promise, if she was properly handled."

"Leave that to me," began Mr. Prior, quite in Fogarth's style; but checking himself, he continued in a less excited tone, "I will speak to Miss Dickinson—a little quiet conversation may cause her to see matters in a proper point of view. Mrs. Prior, you will have time to call at her house on your return; and endeavour to prevail on her and Miss Hamilton to fix a very early day, say, to-morrow, or the day after, for dining at the Abbey.

Mrs. Prior assented; and Lady Clanerris poured forth abundance of thanks for the kindness of her friends.

"It is really too much to expect," she added, "that you should be annoyed with entertaining company on our account."

"In the case of Miss Dickinson, it is any thing but annoyance," said Mrs. Prior, "She is a very old friend—one for whom I have a particular regard. And her young relative, Miss Hamilton, is quite an acquisition to any society. She is a very superior young person in mind and manners.

“Extremely so. I was very much struck with her superior manners and appearance. She is very like somebody we all know. Maria, who did we agree Miss Hamilton was so like?”

While Miss Bindon was expounding her recollections or forgetfulness to Mrs. Prior, her mother took the opportunity of whispering to Lord Clanerris.

“Send that Fogarth away. He must not remain for luncheon. Give him something to do in your study till they are gone.”

Fogarth was instantly dismissed on some plausible excuse, and the whole party soon adjourned to luncheon, which occupied the remainder of the visit.

When the carriages were ordered, Lady Clanerris, who was resolved to leave nothing undone, which might further the good understanding, so far in progress between them, made her humble suit for the pleasure and gratification of the company of all the Prior party, for a few days in the following week, at Kilronan Park. Mr. Prior looked most consentingly; but Mrs. Prior hesitated, and began some of the polite acknowledgments that usually precede the refusal of an invitation, particularly when no good excuse can

be offered. Lady Clanerris would not wait till the irrevocable words were pronounced. She continued curtsying and hoping, and smiling, and beseeching. "It would be such a gratification—her young people were so anxious to become better acquainted with their cousins, &c. &c." Mrs. Prior waited till her whole stock of intreaties were exhausted; or, more properly speaking, till she paused for a reply; and then answered without any formal preface.

"I will be candid with you, Lady Clanerris. If you really wish to cultivate an intimacy with us, it must be on terms of perfect equality. I cannot accept of your hospitalities, unless you are willing to partake of mine."

"My dear Mrs. Prior, what could lead you to suspect any unwillingness on my part? Nothing could give me greater pleasure. You could not be more desirous of seeing us in your house, than we should be happy to go there."

"In that case," said Mrs. Prior in her best manner, which was not at all inferior to Lady Clanerris's very best; "allow me to make a change in the proposed arrangement, by requesting you to give us the honour of your company for Tuesday and Wednesday next, at Prior

Abbey ; and we shall be most happy to come to you at any time after, that may suit your convenience.”

The proposed plan was at once agreed to by Lord and Lady Clanerris and the Miss Bindons, with the assurance of Captain Bindon’s presence also, provided he had made no previous engagement—an event, which, if it should unfortunately occur, was to be a source of the greatest regret to every individual of both families.

“ Well !” said Lord Clanerris, when he returned to the drawing room, after handing the ladies to their carriages, “ that is over !”

“ Yes ; and very well over,” rejoined his Lady. “ We got through it uncommonly well. Mrs. Prior’s sublime airs were, at times, nearly overpowering, but altogether it was more bearable than I expected.”

“ She is no comparison more pleasing than her daughters,” said Miss Bindon. “ Their dulness is intolerable. I was bored to death trying to entertain them.”

“ And the sons !” said Miss Anne Bindon. “ Did you ever see such a pair ? They stood all the time whispering in a corner with those other young men who came with them ; and the

whole of their conversation that I overheard was about hounds and hunting."

"The father is the worst of the whole family," said Lord Clanerris. "He is a bore, and a bear, and an impertinent old curmudgeon."

And here we shall close the strictures on the Prior family.

## CHAPTER VIII.

NOTWITHSTANDING the power possessed by the Romish priests over the minds of their flock—a power so great, that it appeared nothing short of folly in the opposite party to attempt contending against it—they were far from feeling quite at ease as to the issue of the coming contest. Symptoms were shown in many instances, if not of downright disobedience to their commands, at least of a questioning of their authority, and a disposition to argue, or to murmur, which, if not checked in the bud, might, at no distant period, tend to the overthrow of their dominion. At seasons of great excitement they found little difficulty in leading the people at their will; but these seasons could not last for ever. There were necessarily some intervals of repose, and the longer these intervals, the less violent was the succeeding paroxysm. Even in the instance of the approaching election, the excitement had in a great measure subsided. Some, who loved, and others who feared their land-

lords, began to count the cost of offending them ; and the more they counted, the less they found the balance likely ever to be in their own favour. These, and other such selfish considerations, threw a damp over the spirits of the greater body of the poorer freeholders, and it required all Dixie Gregan's eloquence to keep alive the smallest spark of patriotism in many a breast, where, on its first kindling, it burned with dazzling brightness.

It was indeed a very busy time with Dixie. He laboured incessantly, and we must say to his credit, disinterestedly, for the public good : and, though he sometimes experienced disappointments where he least expected them, yet, on the whole, he had cause to congratulate himself that his labours were not thrown away. They had gained him the esteem and warm approbation of the priests—the best judges in matters of that kind—who found him by far the most useful agent in their employment. For Dixie's exertions were not confined to mere speech-making. Much and deservedly as he valued himself on the score of oratory, he could condescend to use any means that were likely to forward the cause in which he was embarked ; and therefore improved the opportunities which a very general acquaint-

ance among the servants of the neighbourhood afforded him, of procuring the earliest information respecting the projects and movements of the Conservatives, which could consequently be countermined, or in some other way obstructed, before they were carried into execution. His success in this department of his political career fully answered the warmest anticipations of his employers. Such a body of important and compact information had never been accumulated in so short a period as he was enabled every week to submit to the consideration of the Reverend Mr. Thrashogue: for, though every Roman Catholic servant in a Protestant family is a spy of the priest, and expected to inform him of every occurrence likely to interest him, yet, from the stupidity of some, and the carelessness of others, much important matter is often unnoticed, or embellished with so many fanciful decorations from the store-house of their own brains, that no small portion of valuable time is frequently wasted by their pastors before they can arrange the heterogeneous materials into a shape adapted for practical purposes. From this irksome task Messrs. Gurteen and Thrashogue were saved by Dixie, who undertook the office of examining, cross-examining, sifting, weighing, pru-

ning, and lopping on himself; and soon gave such proofs of his capabilities for the office, that they seldom found it necessary to resort to other channels for information.

His personal intercourse with his reverend coadjutors was, except on occasions of pressing necessity, confined to a weekly interview on Sundays after Mass; for he had many reasons for wishing Lord Clanerris should remain ignorant of his close intimacy with such avowed enemies to the Bindon interest; lest a suspicion of the real state of the case might very naturally suggest itself. His Lordship was aware of his liberal opinions to a certain extent. He knew that he had figured as an anti-tithe orator on two or three occasions. But that was a delinquency he could well forgive, for it had not touched himself; neither would he have had much objection to countenance a like exhibition any day, provided the clergy could be persuaded to take it all in good part, and still give their support to Captain Bindon. As that was, however, in the nature of things, rather an unreasonable expectation, and as their good will could not at that time be forfeited without the almost certain loss of the county, he expressed great disapprobation of such injudicious proceedings, and threatened

old Gregan with instant dismissal from his service unless his son avoided meddling with politics in future.

Dixie's spirit would at once have prompted him to set Lord Clanerris at defiance, but it was in some measure restrained by parental authority, and altogether kept within bounds by that of his spiritual advisers, who appreciated his talents as Spy Master-general much more than his eloquence. They did not exactly tell him so. They only assured him that he could advance the interests of the people more effectually by submitting to a temporary exile from the rostrum than by open opposition to his patron, who, if really incensed, might adopt measures by which his usefulness would be materially injured. Dixie was amenable, and played his part with so much prudence, that though strictly watched by Sylvester Fogarth, who had a shrewd suspicion of the nature of his employment, no overt act of hostility could be proved against him.

The weekly unburdening of his conscience to his father-confessor had been sufficient for all the purposes of business during a tolerably long period ; but early on the day after the memorable visit of Prior Abbey to Kilronan Park, detailed

so circumstantially in the last chapter, Mr. Thrashogue received a visit from his young friend in his bed-room, which led to a long conference, carried on with so much attention to secrecy, that not a distinct syllable could be heard by the housekeeper and her assistant, whose ears were alternately applied to the key-hole. Dixie had the honour of breakfasting with the priest, and afterwards walked by the side of his horse for a considerable distance, till prudence recommended their separation.

“Don’t pass Hovenden’s house,” said the priest; “he will guess that you were in my company, and the news would soon be carried to Fogarth, who, I would as lief knew nothing about us this turn. Cut across the fields, my lad, and get out on the Ballyfin road.”

“You won’t forget, Mr. Thrashogue,” said Dixie, holding by the horse’s mane, “to talk sharp about my father in Ally Ballantyne’s, when any Protestants are drinking in it. A bad word from you there would do him more service than all the good you could say of him in other places. He has enemies with my Lord, that says he is only true to him from the teeth outwards; but if he hears that you abuse him, he will think him as honest as the sun.”

“ Let me alone to abuse him to the dirt, Dixie, if that will satisfy him ; only, let him take care how he don’t go too far in his make-believes. Some fools might think him in earnest. It requires great caution, let me tell you, Dixie, to manage two faces under a hood.”

“ But Mr. Thrashogue,” again laying hold of the mane as the priest was preparing to trot on ; “ don’t dally about Miss Fiddy. Her four votes will be lost to us, as sure as you are sitting a horseback, if you don’t stir yourself. She has a fire-brand in the house with her already ; and old Prior and his faction will just blow her brains out the day she dines at the Abbey.”

“ Let me see,” said the priest, stopping his horse, and collecting his thoughts for about the space of a minute. “ Instead of going home by the Ballyfin road, cross the bog to Oranard, and contrive to see Tom Mullaheeran. Tell him I have something to say to him ; and that he must meet me where the four roads meet before dusk.”

Leaving Dixie to tread the bog by himself, we shall follow Mr. Thrashogue in his ride to Ballyarden, a townland on the Clanerris property, chiefly inhabited by Protestants. He alighted at a cabin, which had something of an air of comfort about it, and consigning his horse

to the care of the gossoon in waiting, called loudly at the door for the man of the house. The call was answered by the mistress, who, with a superabundance of good manners, expressed great surprize and gratification at seeing him, and hoped his Reverence would walk in, and take an air of the fire. But his Reverence did not choose to do either ; and without returning her greeting, ordered her to produce her husband.

“ If he is not in the house,” he continued, “ send for him wherever he is ; for I won’t leave this spot till I see him.”

“ Oh ! if that be all that troubles your Reverence,” she replied, apparently hurt at his ill-breeding, “ you won’t have long to wait, for he is not ten perch off.”

Then raising her voice to a tolerably high pitch, she notified the gentleman’s wishes to her husband, who immediately appeared from behind a hedge on the other side of the road.

“ Your Reverence is welcome,” he said, approaching hat in hand. “ Won’t you step into the house, and rest yourself after your long ride ?”

But his civility met with as little return as his wife’s. The priest did not even bend his head,

but said in the same unceremonious tone with which he had addressed her.

“Step over to your brother Bryan’s, and desire him and his wife to come here without more delay. I will just have time to see the oats measured for the horse before you are back.”

In a few minutes the two Lanigans and their wives were assembled in front of the cabin, and Mr. Thrashogue having, like a merciful man, provided for the wants of his beast, emerged from the shed, dignified with the name of the stable, and with great calmness of manner, though still sufficiently uncourteous to mark some latent displeasure against them, inquired whether they had promised their votes to Mr. Fogarth the day preceding.

“Few words are best,” he added, “when business of consequence is transacting. So, just answer yes or no to my plain question.”

A dead silence, however, followed. The elder Lanigan scratched his head, and looked sheepishly at his brother Joe, who, without scratching his head, looked significantly at his wife, who looked encouragingly at her sister-in-law, who being the last in the row, was obliged, for lack of an object, to look most complacently at the pig luxuriating in a very capacious dung-hill.

“ My question is asy solved, I should think,” said the priest, after waiting a reasonable time for reply, “ and I again demand an answer—yes, or no.”

“ As your Reverence remarks,” said Mrs. Joseph Lanigan, who was a woman of high spirit, “ few words is best. And, besides, it is only becoming in credible people to speak the truth plain, without fear or favour, when it is the truth. So—one word for all—my man here and Bryan has agreed to go with their landlord; as themselves and their forefathers did before they were born.”

“ Was it the women put you up to this fine job?” coolly inquired the priest, addressing himself to the men.

“ They gave their help, no doubt,” answered Joe. “ But we didn’t want much putting up, to show us what was for our own interest. We are poor struggling men, Sir, in the power of our head; and if he turned to be our enemy, I don’t see who would stand between us and desolation entirely.”

“ Didn’t I pass my word,” asked Mr. Thrashogue, “ that no poor man should come to loss by serving his religion and his country?”

“ So I heard your Reverence say; and Owen

Bellew took you at your word. Yet, after all, himself and his small family found the road was their best provider, when he turned his back on the master that nourished him from the time he was a boy."

"Owen Bellew," he answered, "was a fool, who, because he wasn't made a gentleman at once, took huff; and offended all his friends; and to tell you the truth, I thought you had more sense than to draw him down as a pattern."

"Please your Reverence, there are others besides him to give us warning: and anyhow, Sir, I can't understand, if it's liberty we are fighting for, why a man won't be let think for himself, without them interfering that has no business with other people's business."

"Joe Lanigan," said the priest, "I came here this morning on a friendly errand. Nor shall your disrespectful language provoke me to leave you to the fate you deserve, without endeavouring to bring you to your senses. I could—you know I could grind you this minute even with the ground under my feet—only that's not my way. I am willing to try all fair means first; and I hope before I go to be able to tell the people that you and your brothers are not traitors—that your enemies raised a false report to your disadvantage."

“ But why would your Reverence take so much trouble about us at all ? ” said Joe, with something of a sarcastic smile ; “ and we well able to answer for ourselves, whatever may be laid to our charge. Seemingly, however, you are only joking, when you threaten to grind me without rhyme or reason. For, though you are a powerful man in the arms, and could give me a handling I might not forget in a hurry, yet I am tolerable active that way myself, and can leave my mark reasonable well. Then, if it is your office you would have me to fear, and the strength of your reading, I may as well honestly tell your Reverence, that I am not a man to try a miracle on.”

“ Joe, you’re too venturesome with your tongue,” said his elder brother. “ The gentleman spoke nothing about his office, or threatened at all, at all. He only advised in friendship, for which we are bound to be grateful—and so we are, Mr. Thrashogue ; but you understand, Sir, how our word is passed to our landlord, and you would not be the man to bid us go back of it.”

“ You are mistaken,” said the priest. “ It is my duty to see that you go back of any thing unbecoming Christian people. You are not bound by any promise contracted without my approbation.”

“Sir,” he answered, speaking with considerable agitation, “as my brother said before, we are poor, struggling men, with large families and small means, and nobody to look to after the great God, only the man that we hold under. We are both behind with the rent, and we may be racked any day, horse and foot, if we offend him. Knowing that, and knowing that the world has more to provide for, nor it can asy satisfy, you won’t judge us all out bad intirely, if we considered to do the best for ourselves that we could.”

“You will consider it over again, Bryan. Many a man has thought a foolish thought in a hurry, and changed his mind at a friend’s warning, when he knew he would suffer by his obstinacy.”

What’s done can’t be undone, now, Sir,” he answered; “nor was it done in a hurry. We looked at it every way, before we made up our minds. We guessed you would fault us, and that, I allow, was the hardest with myself to get over. But I did get over it. I promised to be loyal to him I got my bread by; and my brother and myself swore together before witnesses that neither would draw back without the consent of the other.”

“ And will you keep that oath ?”

“ I will, Sir.”

The Priest expressed no unseemly anger at this determined opposition to his wishes. He stood calm and composed, his eyes slowly surveying, one after the other, each of the persons before him, till they rested with a peculiarly sinister expression upon the wife of the elder Lanigan, a mild-looking woman, who had taken no part in the argument. After looking at her with a scrutinizing gaze that covered her face with blushes, he again addressed himself to her husband.

“ You have a large family, you say ?”

“ Middling, Sir. I have seven of them, that I have contrived to rear, with the blessing of God, as well as any other man of my poor ability.”

“ And by all appearance, you expect another soon ?”

“ Why I believe so, please your Reverence—and when it comes, I trust with His help to provide for it too.”

“ I have better news than that for you,” said Mr. Thrashogue. “ It will provide for you. It will make you a rich man, before you know how to look about you.”

“ That’s more nor any man has a right to

expect, Sir. But I may reasonably hope that if it grows up, and that I live to want a little help, a child of my own won't neglect me in my failing-time."

" I mean that it will make your fortune from the minute it is born," said the Priest, " if you make the most of your good luck."

" Only tell me how, Sir ?" asked Bryan good humouredly ; " for that would be the rale good news to men high above me."

" All you will have to do," he answered, " is to turn show-man ; and I don't think there is one in the three kingdoms who would grudge a penny to look into your box. For—mark my words—you will be the father of a monkey, with a tail a yard long : and I wish you joy of your bantling."

He turned away with a loud laugh of derision, in which the younger brother and his wife joined; their merriment, however, being directed against the Priest; but Bryan trembled in every joint, and wiping the cold perspiration from his forehead, cried out in a voice of despair.

" Oh ! Mr. Thrashogue ! Mr. Thrashogue ! Is that what one Christian man would put upon another ?"

The Priest turned and looked witheringly at him.

“ How dare you call yourself a Christian ?” he asked. “ I disown you and all belonging to you. The Church disowns you, and all except the brute beasts will soon disown you, when they will see you dandling one of yourselves upon your knee.”

“ Stop where you are, Sir, ” shouted the poor man, rushing between him and the stable door, and raising his hand in a menacing attitude. “ Unsay them words on the spot, or, by this blessed light, I will strangle the breath out of your body. Unsay them, I tell you, for I feel that my nature is leaving me, and that I am ready to do anything outrageous.”

“ Do what you please, and I shan’t hinder you,” said the Priest, slowly folding his arms and advancing towards him. “ Your brother is ready to assist you, so that the work will soon be done between you. But will that Christianize the unborn ?”

“ No,” exclaimed the poor man bitterly, “ it will not.” Then turning to his brother, “ Joe,” he said, “ you were ever a loving boy to me ; and you won’t fail me now—stubbrint as your sperrit is. Resolve me from the oath we took together on the cross—join me in making peace with the man that has power to scandalize me so,

that I never dar again look one of my fellow creatures in the face."

"Isn't this enough to vex the heart out of a stone?" said Joe, "after my building you up to bear any badgering ; not counting yourself, with courage to face twenty men—and look at the pretty figure you cut now, failing before a story only fit for a ballad. Why, you wonderful man ! Do you believe a word about the monkey ?"

"I do, Joe ; I know he can put that on me, and worse, and so does she too to her sorrow"—pointing to his wife, who had sunk upon a bench beside the door, her face covered with her apron. "Oh !" he added, seizing his brother's arm, and bursting into an agony of tears—"for my sake—for her sake—for God's sake—shew mercy on us all."

"Don't squeeze the life out of me, if you please," said Joe, shaking him off pettishly—"Oh ! what a pity it is that strong limbs were thrown away upon the like of you. Let me alone, I tell you, till I speak to this woman. Biddy," addressing his wife, "we will be the sport and the by-word, and the laughing stock of all the sensible Protestant people about us, if this man can't be flattered into his senses. Talk to Nancy, who has more knowledge from her opportunities

nor he has. If she stands by us, I promise Mr. Thrashogue he will have nothing but his ride for his pains."

"Nancy, dear," said her sister-in-law, "hold up your head and be lively. Where's your education, and where's your sense that always told us what to do when we were for running headlong? Sure it's out of the question for you to give into witchcraft of that wicked sort. Tell us then, are you strong enough to look in his face, and laugh at his unbecomingness? We will stand by you, and Bryan will find his courage when you look cheerful."

"I have no strength," she answered faintly; "and as for holding up my head, why need I try, when it will soon be laid low for ever." Then, while convulsive sobs shook her frame, she added earnestly, "Biddy, the hand of death is on me, I feel it stealing over me, and pressing heavy, heavy at my heart. Oh! then, as you have the feeling of a woman, persuade them men to let me die without discredit, that my poor children may not have to be ashamed of their mother's grave."

"What makes you talk so mournful?" said the other hastily drying her eyes, "or what puts death in your head at all, when you will live to see every one of us dead and buried? Rise your

heart, Nancy dear, for the men will do your pleasure at the first bidding. Joe," she said to her husband, " give over this minute. You cannot stand to your oath, whatever comes of it. If you must have sin upon your head, let it be any sin, but the blood of the helpless."

" It's not me will have her blood to answer for," he said sullenly. " There's the man," nodding at the Priest, " who must hand in that account."

" Then, let him do it ; but, have you no hand in it. Man ! man !" she cried vehemently, seeing that he still hesitated, " am I mistaken in you after all ? Is your heart blacker and harder than his own, that you have no tenderness for a wojman ?"

" Well," he said, after a short struggle with himself, " I give up ; though I would rather cut off my head than be outwitted after so foolish a manner. Bryan, I free you from your oath—and I will back you in whatever *you* are ordered to do, but let no man meddle any more with me."

Without waiting for an answer he walked quickly away ; and while his wife helped the fainting woman into the house, Bryan humbly accosted the Priest.

" Now that we are amenable to our duty, Sir, and that I am ready to lie under your horse's

feet if you desire me, won't you be willing to shew mercy and take off the terrible curse that you laid upon me and the unborn?"

"Yes, I am satisfied. Nothing uncommon shall happen to the child."

"Then, I may depend upon your word, Sir, that I may banish the terror from my heart, and not dread any misfortune at your hands?"

"I told you so before," he answered impatiently. "There is nothing hanging over you worth fretting for. I don't say that the child will live, or, that the mother won't have a bad time; for you deserve some little punishment, and your disobedience can't be passed over entirely—but I never harbour more malice than becomes my profession, and I will do my best to get you off as clear as I can."

"Blessing—Blessings be over you early and late, Mr. Thrashogue," said the poor man, quite softened by the kindness and humanity with which he was treated. "You will have a reward for your goodness to me and mine, when covetousness and care for the world tempted me to do what I might know would displease you; and if death comes into the house with me, I will never complain of others—I will freely say it was at my own inviting."

Mr. Thrashogue had so much business on

hands, during the remainder of the day, that Tom Mullaheeran's patience was nearly exhausted, before he made his appearance, according to his promise, at the meeting of the four roads. Their interview was brief; for Tom had nothing to say that was not forestalled by Dixie, and could hit upon no expedient to entrap his mistress into committing herself on the popular side. He protested, that he and Abby, and even Naty Foody himself—the half-witted creature—had done as much for her, as if she were his own mother, and all to no purpose. Any little good that she got in the kitchen was knocked in the head, the moment she put her foot in the parlour, where Miss Hamilton was always on the watch to poison her mind. Moreover, that since the two coaches from the Abbey had stopped at her door, at the same time, and that all the quality went in and lunched there, after eating and drinking at the Park, she was just beyant herself with pride, and would not think it worth her while to mention any body, if their great grandfather did not keep a pack of hounds."

"I am afraid, if they once get her at the Abbey," said Mr. Thrashogue, "that the game is up."

"That's my notion, too, Sir," said Tom, with

an ominous shake of the head. “ Yet what can we do to stop her ? For, she will go, if it rained cannon balls, she is so up in the moon with grandeur.”

“ And the worst of it is, Tom, you are so careful a driver that there would be no chance of a break down, or an overturn in the big gripe between Cummins’s Bawn and Kilticronneen.”

“ I thought of that before, Mr. Thrashogue. But, besides my own loss, in case any harm happened to Miss Fiddy, her four votes would then be lost for ever ; for, she that will come after her, has neither the fear of God or man to keep her from the worst of bad conduct.”

“ What a desperate minded villain you are,” said the Priest, “ to twist my words into such a meaning ! Do you suppose, I would advise a bone to be broke in her skin ? And could not a fellow come to your time of life, who have driven a jaunting car for the last ten years, be trusted to manage a little accident, that would give a roll in the mud, or something of that kind ?”

“ I’ll do my best that way,” said Tom, “ and that’s all, I hope, can be expected from any man.”

“ You can do it well, Tom, if you only put

your mind to the business ; and I am content to leave it all to your discretion. But, talking of discretion—what was that you were going to say about Simon Dillon, when you first came up ?”

“ I was going to say that he was no true man ; and that he did more mischief to Miss Fiddy’s mind, the other day, by jibing at the clergy, and rediculing confession, nor ten Protestants, with Parson Barrymore at their head, could do in a quarter of a year. By the same token, though I expect your Reverence won’t reape it to my damage, he made very light of yourself at the same time.”

“ Pooh ! pooh ! man,” said the Priest laughing —“ Good night to you. If that is all the harm he does, we won’t quarrel with him. However, I’ll tell you the truth, that for a man of his substance, I don’t think him sound—so have your ears sharp about you, whenever he gives a call at Oranard. Come back, Tom—I was near forgetting—you may drop a hint to any of the people that might like to hear it—It will raise their spirits—that the new member will show himself to-morrow, or, at latest, the day after.”

“ He’s welcome, whoever he is,” said Tom, “ provided he comes with your good word. And,

who is he, Sir? and where does he come from? and what is his name?"

" You will know all about him in good time, Tom. This much must satisfy you for the present, that he is just the one we want, who will stop at nothing till he gets justice done for Ireland: only he expects to be well treated, and to have the Catholics to a man on his side. I positively don't think he would accept a Protestant vote, if we did not recommend him to shew a fair face to all in the beginning."

This piece of intelligence was so interesting, and Tom was so eager to impart it to his friends, that, the moment the Priest galloped off in one direction, he began running in the other, with a speed which soon promised to annihilate the distance between him and Oranard. His progress, however, received a sudden check, by the unexpected appearance of Miss Hamilton, who was returning from her evening walk, at rather a later hour, and at a slower pace than was her habit heretofore. Tom wished to remain unobserved by her, for two reasons. One was, that his leave of absence for the whole evening had been granted, on the plea of some business, which lay on the other side of the village, and he had not a ready-made excuse to account for the

great circle he must have taken to return by that road—the other was, that he wished privately to discover who was the companion of her walk ; for, truth compels us to confess, that she had a companion in the shape of a tall man, enveloped in that most unpicturesque of all garbs, called an Indian rubber shirt, with a romantic looking cap, that covered very nearly three quarters of his head. Neither the Caoutchouk robe, nor the cap, nor yet the horse, which he led by the bridle, while he appeared deeply engaged in conversation with the young lady, were recognised as acquaintances by Tom, whose curiosity was, therefore, excited to a most tantalizing degree. He crept inside of the low fence that bounded the road as near as he could without fear of discovery, but still the distance was too great to distinguish by the imperfect light of a moonless evening one of his features ; and they spoke so low, that he could hardly hear the sound of their voices, without being able to collect one distinct expression. They walked together till they arrived near the entrance of the village, at the junction of a road running in the direction of Kilronan Park. At this point, they stopped, as if preparatory to parting ; and Tom, who was resolved at all hazards to get a nearer view of

the tall unknown, was making his approaches by a more circuitous route, in order to take them in front, when the conversation abruptly terminated, apparently by the lady's refusal to receive a letter, which the gentleman repeatedly, but vainly, pressed upon her. They, however, shook hands : he vaulted on his horse, and rode quickly away ; and Teresa, mending her pace, soon reached the village.

Tom's eagerness to detail the exhilarating news, communicated by Mr. Thrashogue, was absorbed in the more intense anxiety awakened by the mysterious scene just transacted before his eyes ; and instead of following Miss Hamilton to Oranard, he turned up the road, by which the horseman had disappeared, and made inquiries concerning him at every house, on or near the high road for a considerable distance, accounting at the same time for his curiosity by saying, that the horse would just match Mr. Thrashogue, who had desired him to be on the look out for a swift roadster.

But nobody had seen either man or horse, to their great regret at having lost so uncommon a sight, neither could the best guesser afford any assistance by the most ingenious supposition ; as the general opinion seemed to be, on adding all

circumstances together, that the description did not suit gentle or simple, that ever was seen on foot or on horseback, in that or in any other part of the country.

At last, when about to give up the pursuit in despair, he most fortunately met with a lad, who not only knew the gentleman in question, but also knew him as well as he knew his own brother, with this small difference, that he never heard his name but once, and did not remember it now, and that he forgot also the name of the place he came from, and everything about him.

“ I am a stranger in these parts, myself,” said the lad, in excuse for his ignorance, “ being not all out a fortnight hired with Mr. Savage. But there’s not a day since I came there that he does not ride by the door, sometimes with a man in livery after him, and oftener not.”

“ And what sort of a stupid coult must you be,” asked Tom impatiently, “ that you couldn’t compass his name with all your elegant opportunities ?”

“ It’s an out-of-the-way name,” he replied, “ that would take more time to get by heart, nor I could spare from my business. Any how, he’s a young Sir; and I hear them say, he has

a fine place. twelve or thirteen miles off; so may be, you may guess him by that."

" Why boy ! you don't mean Sir Manby Rutherford !"

" You have hit it—that's the very man, name and all."

## CHAPTER IX.

ABOUT the middle of the following day, the new candidate was proclaimed in Oranard, by a special courier from the county town, who brought a number of addresses in the shape of hand bills for distribution. Miss Dickinson was amongst the very first of the respectable inhabitants, who was favoured with a sight of this interesting document ; as on the announcement of its arrival her three domestics rushed into the street to supply themselves, and soon returned, each carrying a printed paper in their hands. Teresa Hamilton, who was confessedly the best reader in the house, was instantly summoned to the kitchen, where Miss Dickinson usually transacted business, and was requested to read the address aloud for the benefit of the assembled household. It was short and very much to the purpose, beginning—" Being called upon by an overwhelming majority of the wealth, independence and respectability of your county," &c. &c. and ending with—" I have the honour to be

M

Gentlemen, your obedient, devoted servant, Thaddeus O'Sullivan Gaffrey."

"To my mind, Ma'am," said Tom to his mistress, when Miss Hamilton had concluded, "that is a very well worded speech, that will have great weight with prudent people. Mr. Davis, too, told me this minute, that he is a very elegant young man, with great expectations—his father having a fine property in the county—besides his mother's brother, of the name of O'Sullivan, who has ships at sea, and will leave him all he is worth."

"It is very well-worded indeed, Tom, only there is a bit of it I don't well understand. Terasa, may I beg of you, if it isn't too much trouble, to read it over again, name and all."

Teresa read it again, pronouncing the three names very distinctly.

Miss Dickinson looked rather puzzled. "I understand the surname very well," she said, "but I give you my word, Terasa, I can make neither head nor tail of the christian name, if it is a christian name, after all."

"The name is a very common one, Ma'am among the Roman Catholic peasantry. It is Thady—the man's name is Thady—Thady Gaffrey."

“ It isn’t joking you are with us, Miss ?” asked Abby Sessnan, her countenance brightening up with great animation.

“ No ; I am quite in earnest. The gentleman’s name is Thady—nothing but Thady.”

“ Gentleman indeed !” repeated Mrs. Sessnan, contemptuously. “ All the money in the king’s pocket wouldn’t make *that* out of all his breed put together. So now, Tom Mullaheeran, pocket your romances about *grandeur* and *gentility*, in my company. I know the man and the dirty stock he came of, better may be nor many within ten miles round. Why, Miss Fiddy, what do you think ? His grandfather was the first man ever put a pot-stick into my hand to make stirabout ! ! !”

“ Then, this much I can say for you, Abby,” replied her mistress, “ that you make it remarkable clean and smooth, whoever was your teacher. Nobody is before you at stirabout, Abby.”

Tom who expected nothing less than this disclosure, was, in Irish phrase, mad with his fellow servant for disparaging a person whom he had undertaken to patronize. He loudly denied the truth of her allegations, and asked, if she had lived so long in the world without knowing that two people might have the same name, and never

be a bit nearer kin on that account. This was meant as a hint to the housekeeper either to eat her words, or explain them away, that they might not leave an unpleasant impression on Miss Dickinson's mind. But Abby, regardless of consequences, followed the impulse of the moment, which was to vindicate her own accuracy and veracity, and for this purpose, proceeded to give a genealogical survey of the Gaffreys.

"The whole faction of them all—Gaffreys and Sullivans—Miss Fiddy," she began, "was bred and born within a stone's-throw of my father's. A very different-thought of man, I can tell you, from one of their description. And the first rise the family ever got, was, when Micky Gaffrey, ould Thady's son, was made boot boy at the sign of 'the three roving blades.' Sissy Sullivan was under the kitchen maid at the same time; and they being both of them scrapers, when they were married they had put by a little penny to set up in the huxtry line. Still they went on scraping and scraping till they got money enough to buy the mills of Clonadoon, which brought in more money to them. And there's the whole tot of their grandeur."

"When you find you are mistaken, I wonder will you be ashamed of yourself, Abby?" asked

Tom, winking at her most strenuously behind Miss Hamilton.

“ Let me alone, boy, I have not done with them yet,” she continued, not condescending to notice his ‘nods and becks and wreathed smiles.’ “ Sissy had a brother, John, that we nicknamed Shawn Dhas, he was so mortal ornary, a cunning, smooth fellow, that hired with a snug, middle-aged, single woman to look after her farm. In the course of time, she was so bewitched, that what must she do but marry him: and he starved her, and starved another wife after her, laying up money, all the time, by handfuls. At last, he joined his brother-in-law, Mick, when he took the mills; and as they both had the knack of saving, I don’t doubt their wealth; but as for their gentility, I leave you to be the judge about that, Miss Fiddy !”

“ Abby, one ought to be cautious about judging a fellow creature,” said Miss Dickinson gravely. “ But this much I will join you in, that we have people—and them not high—in our own county, with names that sound better for the parliament than that gentleman’s, whatever he may be.”

“ Put it out of your head, Miss Fiddy dear, that he ever was, or ever could be a gentleman.

Didn't I tell you his pedigree? And, as you say, small thanks to whoever invited the like of ould Thady Gaffrey's grandson to miscredit us out and out."

"I suppose," said Teresa, "that Sir Andrew Shrivel and this Mr. Thady Gaffrey will be chaired in the same chair, if they shall be returned."

"Dear me! I hope not—I positively hope not, Terasa. I give you my word, I would rather Sir Andrew never sat on a chair all his life, than that such a disgrace should fall on one of his name."

Tom's habitual caution, particularly in the presence of Miss Hamilton, completely forsook him at this speech. He had in former times been the chief counsellor of his mistress, and possessed an influence almost unbounded over her. She liked and disliked as he led her judgment; and though very proud of her religion, on account of its gentility, when compared with Popery, was, at one time very favourably disposed, at his recommendation, to entrust her spiritual concerns, or part of them at least, to the keeping of Father Gurteen. But since Miss Hamilton's residence in the family, his influence had been gradually on the wane. He was, indeed, consulted on most

occasions, but though his advice was always at the time pronounced to be excellent, yet it was not always followed. It seemed to be asked more from habit than from a sense of its necessity. Even persons against whom he had taken most pains to prejudice her, were now received with complacency and her inclination to some of the more plausible tricks of Popery was every day visibly declining.

That Tom should feel annoyed and vexed at such an unexpected turn of affairs was only natural ; and his patience was often severely tried, when instead of dictating with an uncontrolled power, he found himself obliged to submit to the indignity of second-hand authority. But at no time had his altered fortunes caused him so much real pain, as on the present occasion, when he had set his heart on rendering a substantial benefit to his country, by engaging so consequential a person as Miss Dickinson actively in its service; an event not dependant upon hopeful contingencies, but actually within the reach of his own unassisted capabilities, had not the most insidious practises been resorted to to thwart his wishes. When therefore he heard the old lady speak so disrespectfully of his protégé, and guessed that it was only the prelude to further

indignities, by means of the well-timed insinuations which the young lady's malice would most prolifically suggest, his patience broke through all bounds, and while his lips quivered with passion, he gave vent to his indignation in a tone of unseemly violence.

“ Let me tell you, Miss Dickinson, the time is come that no such discourse will be listened to any longer, or that we will allow of comparisons. We don't care a straw for blood—we don't value pedigree half a farthing. What good is in it—you that always have it in your mouth—but only to pamper tyrants, and trample the poor under foot? Now, take this with you—the day is come, when we will try who is the strongest; nor are we greatly in dread for the upshot, for we have God and man on our side: and I would warn people to take care of themselves, and not to turn them that are well inclined to be friends into enemies, lest when the push comes, they will have no wall to lean their back again.”

Miss Dickinson was half alarmed, half offended at this rude attack, and answered with an air of dignity.

“ Tom, I would take advice from a dog, if it could speak and give mannerly language; and so I would from you too; for I believe you to be

one that means well and is honest; but if you reflect on me for pampering, and tramping, you are not the boy I once took you for."

"Nor you are not the woman that you once were," he said, with increasing passion, "when rich and poor gave you a good word, before bad parables were put into your head, to make you false to your own, and join hands with strangers."

"I give you my word, Tom," she replied, very much softened by his pathetic address, "that I am believed, if any one said I am an altered woman: for Terasa here can witness for me that I have not made up my mind yet; and that I know no more at this present minute who to give my four votes to, than if I was the Lady Lieutenant."

"Then why not make up your mind to do what's right, without listening to bad advisers?" he added, looking furiously at Miss Hamilton. "What fault have you to your near friend, Sir Andrew? A man that was the first to set the dogs after the tithe-proctor—aye, and I will ask it again and again, in spite of his pedigree—what fault have you to Mr. Gaffrey?"

Before Miss Dickinson could answer, Naty Foody who had hitherto said nothing, and was

never known to say much at any time, suddenly opened his mouth, and after one or two strong exhalations, as if to clear his lungs from a superfluous quantity of breath, roared out with, as Miss Dickinson afterwards averred, a voice of thunder, “Gaffrey for ever!” He then shut his mouth, threw the turf creel carelessly over his shoulder, and walked into the yard whistling, “the girl that I left behind me.”

This unexpected ebullition produced in the whole party a sensation something like that of an electric shock. For a few seconds they stood looking at one another with an air of vacant astonishment; but by degrees, a smile was gathering fast round Teresa’s lips, which provoked a correspondent movement in the risible muscles of Tom and Abby; and the scene would probably have concluded in a general fit of laughter, had not Miss Dickinson, in whose ears Naty’s vociferation sounded awfully alarming, repressed any inclination to mirth, by moving with her most stately gait towards the door, expressing at the same time her disapprobation of such loudness in her kitchen—a place noted for good behaviour—and protesting that the offending turf-boy should receive a sharp lecture on good manners before the lapse of many hours.

“Terasa,” she began, when she had reached the parlour, and was seated in her hard, ricketty, uncomfortable easy chair, “I will thank you to shut the door close; for I am just afraid to open my lips in my own house, while people may be listening. Now draw your chair near, that I may talk to you unguarded. Oh, Terasa! Terasa! if ever woman was to be pitied on account of four unfortunate votes, I am the very one. There is no end of my troubles—you hear what is thought of me in my own house, and what my own people expect from me, while others are wanting me to please them. I give you my word, I don’t know what to do between them all; and I am more than ever set astray by Naty, for I have often heard it remarked, that it isn’t lucky to go again the advice of one like him that has only half wit to guide him, and that speaks so seldom.”

“He is not half witted, Ma’am. He is merely an oddity; and his taciturnity proceeds from want of ideas to furnish matter for conversation. If I were asked my opinion of him, I should say that in general, it would be safest not to follow his advice in any thing, except perhaps in the matter of fattening geese.”

“I am glad to hear you say so, Terasa, having

always had a very good opinion of him about geese in general. But that won't clear me with Tom—a boy that has my interest at heart as if it was his own, and that I would not offend for more than can I say. And, the dear pity me ! he will be distracted entirely, if I don't give two at least of my four votes to the gentleman whose name you say is Thady—and would you advise me to do that, Terasa ?”

“ No, indeed ; not even if his name were Augustus.”

“ I give you my word, Terasa, that wouldn't make much differ with me, not being over-partial to him. That unfortunate man, Mark Antony, if he hadn't the ill luck to leave his wife, and take up with another woman, which was a foolish turn in one of his years, was, in my mind, as good, if not better than himself.”

An historical reminiscence could at any time divert Miss Dickinson's attention from her own concerns ; and now, though seriously annoyed with the difficulties that stared her in the face, yet the fortunes of Mark Antony were invested with so lively an interest, that she forgot Tom and her four votes, and all the troubles thereon depending, while she proceeded to give Teresa a graphic sketch of his history, interspersed with

copious remarks and moral reflections of her own. She had just fought the battle of Actium, and was in hot pursuit of Cleopatra's flying gallies, when she was recalled to the consideration of her own misfortunes by the entrance of Mr. Barrymore.

The interruption was, however, far from being unpleasant, as might have been expected. Mr. Barrymore was one of her prime favourites, standing much higher in her estimation than any other human being, Tom Mullaheeran not excepted, even in his most palmy days—and she had always determined from the beginning not to take any decided step without consulting him. Teresa, who was aware of her intentions on that head, prudently withdrew after the first civilities, lest her presence might be a restraint on either party, and Miss Dickinson immediately laid her case, with all its intricacies, fully before him; and at the close besought his advice, intimating at the same time, that the course she would most gladly pursue, would be such a happy medium, as should insure her not giving offence on either side.

Now, most unfortunately, Mr. Barrymore particularly disliked being asked to meddle in matters of the kind. He had always avoided

interfering with the political agitations of his parishioners, and felt no inclination to make an exception in Miss Dickinson's case—he therefore declined giving any advice on the subject, further than by recommending her to be determined, in this as well as all other matters, by the dictates of her own conscience.

“Mr. Barrymore,” she said, after a pause, “you may believe it is the truth I am saying, when I tell you I am not at all sure about my conscience; for one time it tells me one thing, and another time it tells me another thing; and I would rather be guided by you than forty consciences, if I had them.”

Still Mr. Barrymore would not budge an inch from his system of non-interference, and persisted in referring the settlement of the question entirely to her own conscience, which, however unsatisfactory in its answers up to the present moment, would, he had no doubt, on a more close and searching consultation, lead her to form a decided opinion.

“I assure you, Sir,” she said very earnestly, “my decided opinion has nothing to do with it. For nobody could persuade me that it is not my duty to look to my own blood relation, Sir Andrew, in preference to a stranger.”

“ In that case why should you hesitate ? Why not support Sir Andrew at once ?”

“ That, Sir, was always my inclination, only I was afraid it might not be my conscience, till you set me right this minute. Now, it will be a comfort to me to have to say, that you thought Sir Andrew was the man I was bound to, and that it was my duty, right or wrong, to stick by him.”

“ Indeed, Miss Dickinson, I thought no such thing—I said no such thing. You said—— However, I believe the less that is said by either the better, as I am sure there will be some misunderstanding : therefore, pray remember, that I do not advise you to support Sir Andrew Shrivel, or any body else ; and that I object to interfering at all in electioneering concerns. I mean to give my vote to Captain Bindon and Mr. Ambrosse, and that shall be the sum total of my sayings and doings on the occasion.”

“ Dear me ! dear me !” she ejaculated despairingly. “ I suppose I ought to do the same ; if I knew what I ought to do ; or if any body would tell me what side I ought to take !”

“ You are harassing yourself most unnecessarily,” he answered. “ Why should you take any side ? Why embark in the business at all ?

Leave your tenants at liberty to vote as they please, and you will save yourself a great deal of useless trouble."

" That would be my wish, Sir, if it was in my power. But you see I am bound to do something for somebody—they all expect it. Captain Bindon called here with a politeness that was most pleasing ; Mr. Ambrosse called here, and was friendly to a degree ; and Sir Andrew wrote as feeling a letter as ever was put on paper : every word of it went to my heart ; for you may believe me, Mr. Barrymore, that there always was the greatest intimacy between the Shrivels and the Dickinsons."

" If the intimacy had been ten times greater," he answered, " I can see no necessity for you to enter into electioneering cabals. Leave Sir Andrew—leave them all—for, in one sense, they are all equally worthless—to manage their own affairs. At your time of life it is particularly unseemly to be occupied with pursuits of so low a nature. Other thoughts should engage your attention ; and you really ought to charge it on your conscience, not to waste thought or anxiety upon an object so completely out of your range of duties."

" As for ranging, Mr. Barrymore, you may

believe me, I never was given to it. My worst enemy cannot accuse me of ever putting a foot inside the chapel-door, but once, when I went to look at a man threshing some new-fashioned wheat in it."

"I never heard that anecdote before," he said; "and I assure you I did not allude to anything of the kind, when I used the word range."

"I am positive you did not, Sir; for it is out of the question that a gentleman like you would listen to anecdotes. And, indeed, you may trust me when I tell you, that I would not change my religion to be made a bishop's lady; nor did I ever, to my knowledge, say a sentence in favour of the Romans, till I read what that ill-advised creature, King James, said, when his daughter—she that was afterwards Queen Anne—ran away from him. 'God help me,' says he. 'Even my own children forsake me.' I confess to you, Sir, I thought that was very moving: so, without thinking, I said I pitied him. And I hope it is not wrong, but I can't help pitying him yet, and thinking that she might have been dutiful to her parent, without following him to Mass."

"I think so too. I agree with you that he was very much to be pitied."

"Sir, it gives me great pleasure to hear you

say so ; for, in my poor judgment, while we hate what is wrong, in their religion we ought to be tender to themselves. We ought not to speak evil of what is good in them, or grudge them our pity when misfortune comes in their way. I have known humane and friendly people among them, Sir—people who would not harm a fellow-creature of their own free-will ; and who, when the priests wanted to put them up to mischief, would tell lies to them out of pure goodness.”

“ If I understand you rightly,” said Mr. Barrymore, “ I should think you mean good nature.”

“ Very likely, indeed, Sir. At the same time I would forewarn you, that I have no dislike to good nature, or goodness of any kind. I positively think it is not at all unpleasing in itself ; and I sometimes reflect with thankfulness how many good people are close beside me. For, sure, Sir, nobody can be better than Mrs. Kil-martin—and Mrs. Gandy is good, and so is Mrs. Banks ; and Lady Clanerris herself, they say, is well inclined. And you may believe me, Mr. Barrymore, though I say it to your face, that you have a great character for being good to the poor.”

Mr. Barrymore bowed, and Miss Dickinson continued.

“I never was prouder in my life, Sir, than one day, when a poor man came up to me, as I was standing at the door, and he praying right a-head for you. He opened his hand, and said to me, ‘I won’t be asking anything from you to-day, Miss Fiddy; for, look, what the parson gave me this minute out of his pocket.’ He counted out three-pence halfpenny; and says I, ‘Did he give you all that?’ ‘He did, indeed,’ says he. ‘Well, it’s all before him,’ says I.”

“If that, or even many other three-pence half-pennies added to that, be all that is before me,” said Mr. Barrymore, “I fear it will not be sufficient to pay for my admittance into the kingdom of heaven.”

“I know it—I know it, indeed, Sir; and you may believe me, that when I say anybody is good, I don’t mean it at all; and when I praise anybody, I don’t intend people to believe the half of what I say. For, there is nobody good, Mr. Barrymore—no, not even yourself—though I have known few like you; and so I often say to Terasa, when I see you walk by with your umbrella under your arm, while it is pelting rain.”

“And, may I ask you, if Miss Hamilton coincides with you in opinion on this point?”

“She does indeed, Sir. Nobody can have a

more proper judgment about goodness than Terasa. She is quite clear about it—as clear as myself. Often and often I said to her, that goodness is a bad thing, when it makes one proud, and ought to be banished entirely. But it is a very good thing to think of nothing else, and, at the same time, not to think about it at all, but to go on hoping and trusting that there is not a worse, or a wickeder creature under the sun than one's own self. I am bad at explaining, Sir," she added, " but I hope I have made my meaning so plain, that there will be no misunderstanding between us."

Mr. Barrymore assured her that she had expressed herself very much to his satisfaction on the article of goodness—and this he said with the most perfect adherence to truth; for though Miss Dickinson's doctrinal expositions were none of the clearest, and often brought discredit upon her, when sifted by an experienced hair-splitter, yet, he understood her, and was satisfied that with all her slip-slop misapplications, and her whole-duty-of-man phraseology, and her prejudice against certain expressions in common use among dissentily-inclined religious people, and her inveterate propensity to think well of everybody, except the Knights of Derryfane, who, after all, she did not abuse—she merely did not

praise them—he was satisfied, we repeat, that her religion was built on the sure foundation of the Word of God, and had perhaps as much perceptible influence over her actions—the only criterion by which men can form an opinion of its reality—as over many others, who could give a more satisfactory reason, as far as mere words were concerned, for the hope that is in them.

During the remainder of his visit, he contrived that the conversation should not again revert to Sir Andrew Shrivel, or anything connected with the election; and Miss Dickinson enjoyed so much the train of thought to which she had been led, that on his departure she expressed her determination to suffer nothing to discompose her mind for the remainder of the evening.

“I give you my word, Terasa,” she said, “I wish I could always care as little about the world as I do now. So, don’t let us have any talk—only a little reading—and don’t let them in the kitchen come near me with their fancies and their foolishness—and remember, Terasa, this evening I will think nothing about it. The day after—but, Oh! dear me! dear me!—Terasa, you will oblige me, if you will open the book at once, and begin anywhere, to stop thoughts, that if they are not bad, are not very far from it.”

## CHAPTER X.

MISS DICKINSON's determination to seclude herself for a whole evening in the privacy of her sitting-room—an event which had not occurred within the memory of the present generation, caused no little surprise, and a considerable degree of excitement in the kitchen-establishment. Naty, indeed, said nothing, but it could be easily guessed that he thought the more; for he was unusually diligent in fulfilling the duties of his numerous avocations, as turf-boy, cow-boy, goose-boy, kitchen-boy, and gossoon in general, without being reminded of them half a dozen times, which was always necessary on common occasions. Tom said little, but Abby said a great deal. She felt tolerably easy as to her own individual case, being conscious that she had given no offence to her mistress, but her fellow-servants were in a state of actual delinquency. They decidedly overstepped their bounds. Naty had been disrespectful, and Tom downright inso-

lent ; and if Miss Hamilton should make use of so good an opportunity to work on the old lady's wounded dignity—where she was particularly sensitive—both might be dismissed at a moment's warning. Now, Mrs. Sessnan could not contemplate the probability of such a catastrophe, without heartfelt concern. Not that she had the smallest regard for either of them, or suspected them for entertaining any extraordinary affection towards her ; but they had a bond of union, called self-interest, which united them very closely. They agreed to cheat their mistress, each in their own department, without interfering one with the other ; and had so conscientiously adhered to their original compact, that they were very well satisfied with the state of the establishment as it then was, and dreaded any change by which so well regulated a system might be totally disarranged.

It would, however, be unfair to implicate Naty Foody altogether in this conspiracy. He was to all intents and purposes a sleeping partner, so far as his own interest was concerned ; for he did not cheat. Whether from folly, or carelessness about money, or from some latent good principle, or any other cause whatsoever, we cannot say, but, we repeat it, he did not cheat for himself.

He indeed, unless well watched, wasted and spoiled, and neglected every thing under his care, not excepting his own property, whether in clothes, money, or the slip of a pig presented to him by his mistress, as a reward for his care and attention. He also must have known that Abby purloined milk, butter, eggs, feathers, oatmeal, candles, tow, tea, sugar, with many other minor etceteras : and he was well aware that though the Epicurean cow had chewed to rags one of Miss Fiddy's new nether garments, that she was guiltless of demolishing the other three, which were carefully laid up in Abby's box, as part of Miss Sessnan's marriage portion. In like manner, he could have given an exact inventory of all the little perquisites which Tom chose should belong to his place, in the shape of bundles of hay and straw, bags of oats, kishes of turf, and stones of potatoes, which he either sold for his own private benefit, or generously made a present of to his mother, who, not to be outdone in generosity, charged him nothing for his washing. This was the head and front of Naty's offending. He had clean hands—we mean figuratively so, for, in reality nothing could be dirtier—and he was so unsociably scrupulous, that he was never known to take a cup of tea from Abby, unless at those

times when his mistress was the acknowledged provider of the entertainment. Putting this and some other little peculiarities out of the question, his worth was fully appreciated by his companions, who gave him the character of the discreetest boy—considering his awkwardness—of any in the parish. Tom was perhaps the most uneasy of the trio. He did not expect immediate dismissal, or even any outward manifestations of displeasure on the part of his mistress; but he was apprehensive of having lost ground in her favour, which might not be regained till the time of accomplishing his favourite project was over. He threw all the blame of his mis-demeanour upon Abby, who by the exposure of Mr. Gaffrey's pedigree, had vexed him, and altogether injured the cause which she was bound to support; and had left a most favourable impression of that gentleman upon Miss Dickinson's mind. Mrs. Sessnan did not submit patiently to any animadversions on her conduct, which she affirmed was precisely what it ought to be, on that and every occasion; at the same time, strongly contrasting her own discretion and genteel manner, with his imprudence and unguardedness. After much wrangling and mutual recriminations she however, at last, pro-

mised, that she would excuse him, and Naty, as well as she could to the mistress, and to tell as many lies as might be necessary, which she hoped was no sin, seeing she had no bad meaning, only to make peace, and do a good turn to a fellow-creature.

In furtherance of this benevolent plan, she sought an interview with her mistress on the following morning, before she left her bed-chamber, and depicted so movingly Tom's distress at having offended her, and Naty's confusion at the bare thought of his foolishness, when she made him sensible, that if any remainder of displeasure lurked in Miss Dickinson's mind, it was quickly put to flight by her pathetic recital. She repeatedly assured the housekeeper that she forgave them from the bottom of her heart; and when the story proceeded to tell how the breakfast—as beautiful stirabout as ever was made—was divided between the dogs and cats and chickens, from the want of stomach on the part of the Christians for whom it was prepared, her eyes filled with tears; she earnestly requested that nobody in her house would make themselves unhappy on any account; and the conference ended by a liberal grant of tea, sugar, and white bread to regale the penitents in the kitchen.

The remainder of the morning scarcely sufficed to prepare for the dinner at Prior Abbey ; for although Miss Dickinson was not very particular on every-day occasions, yet when she went into genteel society, she thought it incumbent on her to make a handsome appearance, such as would reflect credit on her own taste, besides affording gratification to her entertainers, whose gentility she would have considered compromised by any shabbiness in their visitor's habiliments. Her full dress gowns consisted of a bright yellow sarsnet, a powder-blue lutestring, and an evening-primrose gauze, all, as Abby often assured her, on the authority of the best judges, as fashionable and elegant as any other three gowns in the county. She was for some time divided between their claims for exhibition on this important occasion. Her own taste led her to give the preference to the gauze, as more suitable to the season ; but being convicted by the united testimony of her three domestics, who were summoned in consultation, of having worn that very gown three times already out of its turn, she was prevailed upon to consign it again to the drawer in the tall-boy ; and on the recommendation of Miss Hamilton, the powder-blue lutestring was promoted to the honor of dining at Prior

Abbey ; Teresa engaging to adjust a fold in the front breadth, so judiciously, as to hide a large coffee stain, which most unluckily had fixed itself in so conspicuous a situation.

The day was remarkably fine, neither overwhelmingly hot nor uncomfortably cold, exactly the temperature most congenial to Miss Dickinson's constitution, and during the two first miles of the drive, she repeatedly congratulated her cousin on their good fortune in encountering so little dust, and as often expressed her firm assurance that they would arrive at their journey's end, just as fit to be seen, as if they had travelled in a coach and six.

These comfortable feelings, however, soon began to be disturbed by the unaccountable behaviour of the horse, who, contrary to his uniformly dutiful and docile habits for the period of seventeen years, began suddenly to shew symptoms of restiveness, and a disinclination to obey either the voice or whip of the driver. At first, his pranks were confined to an awkward attempt at cantering, which being discouraged by Tom, he proceeded to kicking, plunging, rearing and backing to the great surprise of his mistress.

“ I give you my word, Tom,” she said, “ I am not quite asy in my mind. Something must

be the matter with the baste. Are you sure the collar is not galling him?"

" Oh ! not at all, Miss," answered the driver. " He is only skittish for want of work. Don't be fretted, and I'll soon flatter him into his own trot again."

The flattery which consisted of two or three loud threats, accompanied by the same number of jerks of the reins, and blows of the whip, so far from improving the temper of the horse, only added to his irritability ; and he became so unmanageable, that Teresa in great alarm, insisted upon Tom's alighting, and leading him by the head, till his fit of obstinacy or exuberance of spirits had subsided. Tom very unwillingly obeyed, and not till his mistress had reiterated her commands to the same effect. But this manœuvre was even more unsuccessful than the preceding flattery. It was in vain that he chucked the horse's head violently, and pulled him forward with all his strength. The animal began backing more determinately, and Teresa had scarcely time to leap from the car, when it disappeared with a heavy crash into the deep ditch at the side of the road.

To save our readers any unnecessary alarm, we hasten to assure them that Tom had managed

the whole business with the greatest judgment. The two shafts were broken, but Miss Dickinson escaped unhurt. She had presence of mind to hold fast by the car, and as the ditch into which it rolled, was considerably sloped, the shock was not violent ; and she was quickly extricated from her perilous situation, without sustaining the slightest injury to person or dress. Her spirits however were so much flurried that she was unable to join in the conversation between her cousin and Tom, as to how their return home could be effected ; for, to proceed to Prior Abbey was out of the question. She could only enter her strong protest against ever trusting herself again with that unfortunate dumb brute, who might take any thing wicked into his head.

“ I would walk a hundred miles,” she said, “ before I would get such another upset ; for I give you my word, Terasa, though nothing could be safer, still it has taken my senses from me, out and out, so that if you asked me, I could not tell you if it is on my head or my heels I am standing.”

Nothing could be more embarrassing than their present dilemma. Miss Dickinson could not walk half a mile ; there was no house within a considerable distance, and the road was an un-

frequented one. Nothing therefore was to be done, but for the two ladies to remain with the broken vehicle, while Tom was to be dispatched on horse-back to engage the nearest assistance that could be had.

It came sooner than their most sanguine hopes could have expected. A very smart jaunting car, driven at a rapid pace, and carrying two young men just then came in sight. It halted at the scene of the late disaster, and questions were asked, and answers given, and services proffered, and objections anticipated, in a much shorter time than it would take to relate them. It will suffice to tell, that the gentlemen were on their way to dinner at Prior Abbey, and intended returning that evening to Oranard. They had just two vacant places—the horse was the gentlest of quadrupeds—the Priors would be both alarmed and disappointed, and, in short unless the ladies consented to accept their escort to the Abbey, they must peremptorily insist on seeing them home immediately.

Miss Dickinson was still too much bewildered to understand any thing very clearly. She only had a consciousness that somebody whose face she had seen before, was very civil and polite—so much so, as to offer to lose a dinner at one of

the first houses in the country—a sacrifice to which she would be by no means accessory—she was therefore quickly prevailed upon to do whatever was proposed; allowed herself to be comfortably fixed upon the car; and had almost reached the last gate in the demesne, before she was thoroughly alive to the consciousness that she was sitting by the Rev. John Knight—one of the Knights of Derryfane—and one of the last persons to whom she would willingly owe an obligation.

But willingly, or unwillingly the obligation was incurred. He had acted in the handsomest and most disinterested manner, when she was in distress, far beyond what could have been expected from him, considering the deadly feud between the families; and she was determined, though it must be confessed, not till after some hard struggles with the remainder of a proud spirit, to acknowledge the obligation to its fullest extent, by saying and doing all that good feeling and good breeding could possibly suggest. Accordingly on their arrival at the house, she was prepared to express herself to the clergyman in the most obliging terms, and returned a superabundance of thanks to him and *the other gentleman*, for their uncommon politeness and safe

driving. *The other gentleman* was immediately introduced as Mr. Arthur Knight, younger brother to the curate ; and though, at the announcement, a feeling of annoyance at being thus involuntarily overwhelmed with favours from Derryfane, caused a slight embarrassment of manner, yet she instantly recovered herself, and to prove that no former offences on the part of that family should influence her to undervalue their present good offices, she repeated her civil speech over again, with even stronger expressions of gratitude, and deeper and more stately curtsies.

“ One is called to trials in this world,” she repeated to herself, as she slowly followed the footman to the drawing-room, “ and one must bear them in a Christian-like way. It is too true, that we are desired to love our enemies, even when they would take our lives ; and I suppose one ought not to feel worse to them when they show good inclinations. Well, I hope I may be able to forgive them that never injured me or mine, though their forefathers did. I will resolve to try. I will. I will indeed—indeed, I will.”

The dinner party was small. In addition to the party already specified, Sir Manby Rutherford was the only visitor ; consequently Miss

Dickinson was the great lady of the day. The seat on the sofa next to Mrs. Prior was allotted to her. She was handed out to dinner by Mr. Prior—a privilege never before enjoyed by her—and received so much attention in their various departments from the young people, that her late disaster, with all the forgiving consequences likely to ensue, was soon forgotten. She felt so pleased with herself, with every thing, and every body, that when asked to drink wine by Mr. John Knight, she not only assented with her usual form, “with the greatest pleasure, Sir,” but laid a marked emphasis on the superlative, without the slightest mental reservation to nullify its meaning.

The conversation during the first course, was what is called general ; that is, somebody now and then made a remark, which somebody else answered : and nobody seemed much to care what any body said, provided it was just sufficient to prevent the awkwardness of a dead silence among a party conscious of possessing the free use of their tongues. But Mr. Prior at last introduced a topic, too interesting to be dismissed with a passing remark ; and he had scarcely alluded to Mr. Gaffrey’s address, when all the gentlemen and some of the ladies began to discourse most fluently.

“ After all,” said Mr. Arthur Knight, in answer to a despairing observation from Mrs. Prior, “ the priests may have overshot their mark in this instance. They are playing a very desperate game ; and I should hope there is still good feeling enough left in the county, to prevent the intrusion of a person like him among us.”

“ There is no ground for apprehension,” said Mr. Prior, “ if the Protestants hold together.”

“ But will they ?” inquired Sir Manby Rutherford.

“ Will they !” repeated Mr. Prior, contemp-  
tuously. “ To be sure they will ; at least, all  
who have any regard for their character : and I  
hope, for the honor of our county, that that  
number is not small. What is your opinion,  
Miss Dickinson ?”

“ My opinion, Sir, is, and always was, that a  
good character is never a loss to any body, put-  
ting honor entirely out of the question.”

“ I understand you. By honor you mean  
rank in society ; and I quite agree with you. In-  
deed, it would have surprised and disappointed  
me very much, had you shewn any disposition to  
desert the Protestant cause at any time, particu-  
larly at such a time as the present. Whenever  
the opposite party pretend to be quite sure of

you, I always silence them by saying that you are so staunch a Protestant, that you would not give your interest to your own brother, if he was a radical; and consequently, that Sir Andrew cannot expect to rank you among his supporters."

Miss Dickinson was not prepared for this attack. She fidgetted a little on her chair, and after a short pause, replied. "The Shrivels are an ancient family, Mr. Prior; and they, and the Dickinsons were always very intimate and friendly—not, that I have made up my mind yet about my four votes. But indeed, Sir, I always considered Sir Andrew to be a good Protestant."

"My dear Madam, how could you be so mistaken? Sir Andrew a good Protestant!—a man who wants to pull down the church."

"Sir, I hope he may never be able to do that. You may believe me, Mr. Prior, that though he is my own blood relation, I would be sorry to live to see that day."

"So should I, Miss Dickinson; but, if we would avoid that evil, we must endeavour to keep him, and others like him, out of parliament."

"I would avoid anything, Sir, that was evil, if I knew it, and could not help it; and I am

sure, so would poor Sir Andrew, if he thought there was any harm in it."

"Family connexion or private friendship should never be permitted to interfere with public duty," continued Mr. Prior, without noticing her last remark, "We all owe a duty to our country, Miss Dickinson, and a duty, believe me, of the most paramount nature."

"I do believe you, Sir. What you say is like every thing else, very true, and very proper. Nature teaches us our duty, and if we follow nature, duty will come of itself."

"The old Romans," continued Mr. Prior, "understood and practised true patriotism. The public good was every thing with them. They never pleaded relationship as an excuse for political inconsistency. You may remember how Brutus acted in the case of his two sons, when they were convicted of conspiring against their country."

"Dear Sir," answered the lady, pleadingly, "consider the times were very different then; and what was proper for people of their description, would be entirely out of the way for us. Why, Sir, if I was to die upon the spot, I could not do to a mad cow what Brutus did to his own children. Indeed, Sir, in my opinion he was too

strict: for one would think it was punishment enough to behead them, without lashing them beforehand, as he gave orders with his own lips."

"We will neither lash nor behead Sir Andrew," said Mr. Prior, laughing, "We will only try to prevent him having the power of inflicting such gentle correction on ourselves. He belongs to a party whose tender mercies I should be sorry to trust to, if it once gained the ascendancy."

"The point remains to be proved," said Mr. John Knight, joining in the conversation, "whether the affairs of the nation may not be as well managed by one party as the other."

Miss Dickinson looked puzzled, and Mr. Prior astounded.

"What do you mean?" he asked sharply, "What put such nons—I mean, such a fancy into your head?"

The Curate of Innisraymond was nothing loth to explain his meaning, which he proceeded to do at some length, without succeeding in making it very clear to his auditory. In fact, it is probable that it was not altogether intelligible to himself; for, though he was rather a clever young man, and by no means deficient in understanding, yet he had a fanciful imagination, which delighted

in novelty, and disposed him often to take up opinions on trust, particularly if they were put forward by persons professing zeal in the service of religion. On two or three occasions he had been on the point of throwing up his curacy, and joining some of the separating bodies, whose proselyting and plausible emissaries sometimes visited Innisraymond, for the purpose of making converts among the more religiously-disposed Church of England persons in the neighbourhood. But Mr. Barrymore, whose piety, though less eccentric, was, he acknowledged, not less sincere than that of the most admired novelty-monger, had fortunately obtained considerable influence over him; and, by his means, he not only had been kept from doing any thing very irregular, but seemed to be fast sobering down into something like common sense. He still, however, indulged in an occasional flight, and having lately met with an English clergyman of superior rank, pleasing manners, lively imagination, and evangelical, whiggish principles, who brought certain strange things to his ears, he hastily adopted all his opinions; and, to the great annoyance of his family, professed an utter indifference on religious grounds to all the innovations perpetrated or contemplated in church and state: “A Chris-

tian," he said, "should not interfere with politics. Let the men of the world manage worldly matters; they were the instruments best suited for such a work, and between such characters there was no choice, as they were all equally bad. An ungodly man was an ungodly man, whether he rejoiced in the name of Whig, Tory, Protestant, or Papist, and nothing good could be expected from him. Indeed, he was strongly of opinion, that public affairs would be better managed by those who professed no regard for religion, than by men attached to Protestant principles, but whose hearts were uninfluenced by the holy doctrines they held. God's blessing could not follow their counsels, however wise or prudent. For my part," he added, "I am glad I have no vote; but if I had, I freely confess I should feel inclined to give it to the popular candidates in preference to the Conservatives."

Mr. Prior listened very impatiently to this long harangue, which he had not interrupted for fear of interesting Miss Dickinson too deeply in the argument. Her natural leaning to Sir Andrew might be at once strengthened into decision, if she was led to think on the authority of a clergyman, that her duty and inclination pointed the same way. As it was, however, he perceived

that no harm was done. Mr. Knight declaimed in general terms, and Miss Dickinson never could perfectly comprehend any subject in the abstract. Those who knew her best were aware that it was necessary to particularize very minutely, and to illustrate very familiarly, in order that she should not come to a conclusion perhaps directly opposite to the one they wished her to form. On the present occasion she came to no conclusion at all. She merely thought that the curate—whatever he was talking about—had talked more than his share—more than his rector would have done who could speak so much better. Besides, she never liked the Knight voice. It was harsh and loud, and she was not sorry, when Mrs. Prior gave the signal for retiring, as thoughts began to force themselves, which she did not wish to entertain, particularly on that day, without the consciousness of downright ingratitude.

Instead of proceeding to the drawing-room the ladies by common consent adjourned to the gardens, where they were in due time joined by the gentlemen; and the party soon broke up into small knots of twos and threes, and dispersed themselves here and there, as choice or accident lead them. Miss Dickinson, not being

a good walker, chose a seat in an old fashioned arbour, where she was joined by Mr. Prior, who took this opportunity of pressing his suit—with what success will be in due time related. Miss Hamilton, who counted four in her party, on her entrance into a shady walk, found herself at the end of it, *tete a tete* with Sir Manby Rutherford. Mr. John Knight was seized upon by all the young Priors, to the goodly number of seven, and carried off to the terrace at a distance from the rest of the party, that they might have full and free opportunity of lecturing him on his political inconsistency; while Mrs. Prior, attended by Mr. Arthur Knight, made the tour of the pinery, grapery, blow houses, green houses, &c.

“The plants here,” she said, as they entered a small conservatory, “belong to my nephew. He is making some alterations at Manby Grange, and till they are completed, I have undertaken the care of his exotics—a charge of some responsibility, I assure you, as he values them very highly.”

“They seem to thrive very well under your management,” said the Gentleman, with that vacant look which proved that civility alone made him take any interest in their welfare.”

Mrs. Prior stooped down to examine an ugly little thing, that seemed to be pining away with a green and yellow melancholy.

“ This is certainly not thriving,” she said : “ it looks very sickly, and I know Sir Manby is particularly anxious to preserve it. Do you know what part of the garden he is in ?”

Mr. Knight could not exactly tell, but offered to make all necessary inquiries, and instead of despatching one of the garden boys upon the errand as Mrs. Prior requested, hastened to do it himself, as if a moment’s delay might be fatal to the suffering plant. The Baronet was quickly found, and being informed, without any circumlocution, of the impending misfortune, and Mrs. Prior’s wish to see him on the instant, he made his bow to Teresa, and proceeded to join his aunt in the conservatory. Arthur waited till Sir Manby turned into another walk, and then, in an abrupt and hurried manner, addressed Miss Hamilton.

“ Teresa,” he began, “ I must return to Derryfane to-morrow ; and what shall I say to my father ? Must he not consider it a mark of great disrespect, if you refuse to read his letter, particularly after my assuring you of the kind feelings which dictated us ?”

“ I mean no disrespect to Mr. Knight,” she answered ; “ but I cannot—will not—enter into a correspondence with him, unsanctioned by Miss Dickinson.”

“ That difficulty can soon be obviated,” he said, “ by permitting him to apply to her at once for her sanction.”

“ It would be useless,” she replied, “ worse than useless. It must inevitably lead to consequences of such a nature as would change the favourable sentiments with which Mr. Knight now professes to regard me, into the same feelings of contemptuous disapprobation, so strongly expressed by him in a former letter.”

“ Teresa, you seek for objections instead of obviating them. My father wrote that unfortunate, and I believe—for he did not shew it to me—unwarrantably harsh letter under very strong excitement. Like many other parents he indulged extravagant hopes in the way of marriage for me; and when they were disappointed, it was only natural in one of his hasty disposition to use exaggerated expressions on the impulse of the moment. But, unless by your residence with Miss Dickinson, you have imbibed a large portion of her unforgiving spirit, you will not visit his one offence with such heavy displeasure, when he acknow-

ledges his fault, and offers all the reparation in his power."

" He is acting as hastily in the present instance, as on a former occasion," she answered. " He then knew me to be poor, hopelessly poor, and he spurned me contemptuously. He now conceives me to be comparatively rich—at least, in prospect—and he condescends to hold out the olive branch. But he might be sadly disappointed, if I took advantage of his ignorance respecting the true state of my affairs. Miss Dickinson has not, as is reported, settled her property on me. She may change her mind and her will to-morrow. She is, as you may have heard, strongly prejudiced against your family, and if she discovered that I was clandestinely holding intercourse with them, while living in her house, and a dependant on her bounty, I could not much blame her if she withdrew her friendship from me, and sought an heir to her property more worthy of it."

" She is an uncharitable, unchristian, prosing, bothering, doting, hypocritical, stiff-necked old beldam," said Arthur, endeavouring to force himself into ill temper by multiplying injurious epithets. " What use in her canting about religion with Mr. Barrymore, if she indulges such

abominable feelings towards those that never injured her?"

"She does not indulge them," said Teresa. "She really endeavours to repress them. But a prejudice of so long standing as to become almost part of herself cannot be eradicated in a moment."

"What is the cause of this prejudice, as you call it? or has she any reason for it except her own rancorous disposition?"

"You must not speak so harshly of Miss Dickinson," said Teresa, earnestly. "She is a very amiable woman, with more good qualities than almost any other person I ever knew. She has also some few failings, amongst which her prejudice against your family is the most objectionable. I do not exactly understand its origin, but I believe it arose from a claim made by your grandfather or great grandfather to some acres of bog on the Ardcarnacarrighy property."

Arthur laughed. "An admirable excuse for envy, hatred, malice, and all uncharitableness. But," resuming a serious tone and manner, "if she really is the amiable person you describe, might she not, by a candid disclosure on your part, be induced, in time, at least, to think favourably of my pretensions?"

“ I cannot say ; and you will, I fear, feel disappointed, if not displeased, when I tell you that I cannot make the trial, whatever might be the event. A disclosure so unexpected, so undesired, would cause her very deep distress ; and though her objections are frivolous—call them if you please foolish—I owe her too much to give her the slightest cause for uneasiness.”

“ Teresa,” said Arthur, stopping and speaking with considerable agitation. “ What is all this ultra delicacy leading to ? this wholesale deference to the feelings of a most unfeeling old woman ? Am I to understand that your gratitude to Miss Dickinson would lead you to break off your engagement with me, if she issued her commands to that effect ?”

“ You forget,” she answered, “ that our engagement—if my acceptance of your addresses may be called such—was virtually dissolved, when your father so decidedly refused his consent to our marriage.”

“ I deny that Miss Hamilton—most positively, peremptorily, solemnly deny it—I told my father that I never would give my hand to another woman—I told you the same—and no prospect of emolument—not even the reversion of the principality of Ardcarnacarrighy should tempt me to break my word.”

“Very heroically spoken,” said Teresa, smiling at his vehemence; “and though I do not imitate your sublimity of phrase and manner, I profess as strict an observance of a promise as yourself, if I had made one.”

“If! Miss Hamilton!”

“We have no time;” she added, hastily, “to argue that point now, as I see your brother and his party turning this way. Nor is it of much consequence. Let this satisfy you. While you continue to regard me with your present sentiments, you need not fear an unkind return from me. And as for Miss Dickinson’s claims upon my gratitude, while I acknowledge, and shall endeavour to evidence my just sense of them in every possible manner consistent with principle, they never shall interfere with the prior and stronger ones that are due to you.”

“Dear Teresa!”

“No dearing, I beseech you; for here they come, still engaged with politics—a subject which I sincerely hope, they may suppose, we have been as intensely discussing.”

The different parties were soon again assembled in the drawing-room; and, the remainder of the evening afforded no incident worthy of commemorating. On the first intimation after

tea, from Miss Dickinson, of her wish to go home, Mr. Knight's equipage was in readiness; and she was safely and comfortably set down at her own door, at least three quarters of an hour sooner than if she had travelled with her own horse, even in his best days and most tractable mood.

## CHAPTER XI.

SYLVESTER FOGARTH's political bias was suspected by Mr. Prior and others to have a tendency to liberalism, and he did not therefore always gain from them the credit which his exertions on the Bindon side deserved ; but truth compels us to say, that whatever his secret inclinations might be, they were not permitted to interfere with his employer's interests. He really worked hard for them ; and being a very clever and a very unprincipled man, was able, on many occasions, to foil the priests at their own weapons. Some Roman Catholics were, by his skilful arguments, persuaded to set their clergy at defiance, and some others, who were not so stout-hearted, promised to go on his errands to Dublin, or Cork, or Galway, or any where else at the time of the election. By these means the numbers on either side were pretty nearly balanced : indeed the scale seemed to preponderate in favour of the Conservatives, and their hopes,

in consequence, rose high. But the desertion of the Lanigans, on whose steadiness he repeatedly offered to wage a considerable sum, was a severe blow, and a heavy discouragement to the cause. As matters then stood, even the loss of two votes could not easily be made up : and it was soon apparent that the diminution of their forces would not end there. The wife of the elder Lanigan was taken with premature labour the day after Mr. Thrashogue's visit, and died, giving birth to a still-born child. The panic among the lower order became general. In her death they acknowledged the hand of God, as miraculously punishing disobedience to the priest; and all those who had heretofore withstood threats or solicitations, and those who were still wavering between interest and religion, hastened to their respective pastors to deprecate their just indignation, and escape the judgments hanging over themselves and families, by promising a blind submission to their commands. Fogarth was sorely annoyed at this unexpected occurrence. He found himself on the point of utter defeat at the moment when his hopes of success were most sanguine ; and he could devise no stratagem to turn the fortunes of the day in his favour. His sole means either for defence or aggression were

carnal weapons ; and his slender equipment was fast failing before their complete panoply. But was the case desperate ? Could nothing be done ? These and similar questions he repeatedly put to himself, but without receiving any thing like a satisfactory answer. At length his thoughts rested upon Simon Dillon, his father-in law elect, and he resolved to make a desperate attack upon him. He knew that he despised and hated the priests ; and that he was no farther a radical than in his wish to have no superiors—inferiors he could tolerate with infinite complacency—that the object of his heart's dear idolatry was money, and that he was of so daring and determined a spirit, that whatever side he cordially supported, would find in him a most valuable and influential agent. No time was to be lost in securing him, if possible ; and he immediately proceeded to Ardcarnacarrighy, with full powers from his employers, to deal with him on the most liberal terms.

On entering the small court or yard before the house, his ears were assailed by a tremendous uproar from within. The voice of Dillon was heard in loud displeasure, imprecating curses upon some unfortunate delinquent, who, at the same time it was apparent, by no unequivocal

sounds, was undergoing severe bodily castigation, while the two servant maids alternately shouted murder, and craved mercy for the offender. Fogarth leaped from his horse, and was about to enter the house, when the door opened, and Dixie Gregan, his face streaming with blood, his clothes ruthlessly torn, and his whole person exhibiting marks of secret violence, rushed past him. He ran headlong, as if fearful of pursuit, till he reached the low wall forming the enclosure in front of the dwelling. Here he stopped for a moment, and turning round, shook his clenched hand in the direction of the door, and swore with the most awful imprecations that he would take a bloody revenge for the treatment he had just received. He then vaulted over the wall, and speedily gained the high road. The din in the house was not much diminished by Dixie's departure. Dillon continued to scold and blaspheme with even more violence, and Fogarth conceiving that he could not have chosen a more unfit time for transacting a business that required cool deliberation was meditating a hasty retreat, when he was observed by the master of the house, who hailed him with extravagant demonstrations of welcome.

“ You are come in the very nick of time,” he

said, shaking him by the hand, while his voice faltered with suppressed passion ; “ and you never found me before in so obliging a humour. Why, man, I will astonish you with my agreeability.”

He hurried him into the room dignified with the name of the parlour, and then, raising his voice to its highest pitch, called to his daughter to come out of her hiding-hole, as another bachelor was waiting to see her.

“ Why, is Miss Dillon hiding ?” asked her admirer. “ I hope nothing has occurred to alarm her.”

“ Oh ! nothing at all. Only young girls are apt to be frolicsome, and she is fond of playing hide and go seek. What are you dallying about ?” he roared again. “ If you don’t come here this minute, I’ll find a short way to bring you.”

Margaret immediately entered the room. She was pale and trembling with terror ; and for the first few minutes appeared scarcely conscious of the presence of a third person. Her father fixed his eyes upon her with a malignant expression, and then turning to Fogarth, he said,—

“ You often called me an obstinate man for not consenting to let you marry that girl at once. You shall not complain of me any longer, for I give her to you this very minute ; and with her I give—my blessing.”

“ That would be good news indeed, if I could think you were in earnest,” said Sylvester.

“ Put a book into my hand, and I will swear it, if you won’t be satisfied short of an oath,” answered Dillon; “ and I would advise you to make no delay, or may be, Mr. Dixie Gregan will step in between you, and carry off your sweetheart before your face.”

“ Oh! Father! Father!” said Margaret, speaking with difficulty, “ if you are angry with me for one fault, don’t accuse me of another I could not be guilty of; and don’t let my name be brought in question about such as him. You know the boy is nothing to me. He came here this morning on no errand, only to tell me news of the country.”

“ I am not accusing any body,” said her father, with affected calmness. “ I am only a simple-minded man who thought there might be a liking, when underhand dealings of all sorts were going on between a smooth tongued chap, and a self-willed, undutiful girl.—What do you think, Sylvester?”

“ Think? I think nothing; for I know nothing. I see that you are angry with Miss Dillon, and that is all I know about the matter.”

“ The story is soon told,” began Dillon; but

immediately relapsing into a furious passion, it prevented him giving a very lucid account of the transactions that led to such outrages of speech and action. It was by dint of close questioning between every burst of fury that Fogarth at last became master of the subject. The facts were these. Dillon had received intelligence only an hour previously, through the means of a gossiping neighbour, that his daughter had lent three hundred pounds, left her by her grandmother, to Mr. Gurteen, in aid of the fund subscribed for defraying the expenses of the impending election. Also, that Dixie Gregan's eloquence was the lure employed to wheedle her out of the money ; and moreover, that the said Dixie confidently promised, either by fair means or foul means, to open the father's purse strings not less widely than the daughter's. He instantly returned home, taxed Margaret with the fact, which she was obliged unwillingly to confess ; and while heaping unmeasured abuse upon her, not without threats of a discipline of another nature, he unfortunately descried the gamekeeper's son, creeping stealthily through the kitchen, in order to make his modest exit by the back door, and instantly pounced upon him. It was in vain for the orator to protest his innocence of any sinister intention,

and declared what was really the truth, that he came to tell Miss Margaret, how the cause was prospering. Dillon wanted an object to vent his wrath upon in a more manly manner than mere scolding, and having found what, at least, appeared to him a very worthy one, he did not suffer him to escape till his horsewhip had lost two thirds of its original dimensions. After finishing his story, he paused to give Fogarth an opportunity of delivering his opinion; but as he seemed disinclined to speak, he continued harping on his daughter, with increased bitterness.

“ She hasn’t got even the scratch of a pen for her money,” he said, “ and is there much chance do you think, that she will ever see a penny of it?”

“ There will be a flemish account of it, I fear,” answered Fogarth, shaking his head, and walking up and down the room, vexation strongly marked in every feature. “ It is a true saying that a fool and his money are soon parted; and I really am surprised Miss Margaret that you did not consult your father, or—any body you could have depended upon, before you allowed yourself to be flattered and gulled by that swindling little reptile, who deserves worse handling than he has got.”

“ The money is safe,” said Margaret; “ and I was neither flattered nor swindled out of it. I lent it to Mr. Gurteen, on his word, which I would trust for untold gold, that it would be repaid very soon. And I must say, Mr. Fogarth, I do not think it overkind in you to increase my father’s anger against me, by speaking in that unguarded manner.”

Margaret’s confidence in Mr. Gurteen’s integrity so far from softening her father’s indignation against him and her, only served to condense it into an obstinate implacability, which, while it hardened his heart, calmed in some degree the natural ferocity of his temper. Instead, therefore, of breaking out into a storm of passion at her ill-timed praise of the priest, he pretended not to have heard it, and turning to Fogarth, invited him to take a chair that they might converse more at their ease.

“ Let us come to business at once,” he began; “ for I have a good deal on my hands. Mr. Gurteen and the other gentlemen of his cloth, who are doing so much for the good of religion, think they outwitted me, and made me to be a bye-word for every idle tongue; but I have a trick in store for them, to turn the laugh against themselves. I can do more against them than they

dream of. I have a stronger hold over some responsible men than all their miracles can loosen ; and I will use it to their disgrace and confusion. From this hour, Sylvester, you may count upon me as a fast friend. I make no bargain—I will take no bribe—I will work for you without fee or reward. My own vote would be nothing by itself, but it will bring others after it, to the tune of half a dozen or more, from friendship to myself ; besides three or four others who shall do my bidding, or I will cant them to the last stick in their possession."

" Oh, father !" cried Margaret, throwing herself on her knees before him, and forgetting every thing in her horror at his political delinquency, which conveyed nothing less to her superstitious imagination than the loss of his soul. " Oh ! Father, don't let my unfortunate mistake drive you into sin. I meant no harm ; and no harm will come of it, if you don't bring it on us all by belying your profession. Oh, think of the curse from the altar against traitors !—Think of your good name here, and your soul hereafter."

Sylvester knowing that his ungovernable temper, when excited by opposition, was capable of the most savage actions, placed himself between

him and his daughter to ward off the blows which he expected would follow her expostulation ; but to his great surprise, he preserved an unwonted composure. Again, he took no notice of her, but motioning Fogarth to the chair, which he had just left, continued in a confidential tone.

“ Having settled that matter with you to your satisfaction, I hope, I would be glad to have your advice upon a little business of my own. As I will soon have the house to myself, I have a notion of bringing home a housekeeper ; for it would be too lonely to live here without somebody to open one’s lips to. Now, I have two matches in my eye that would answer both equally well. There is Christie Ganly’s daughter, a stirring, elderly girl, who was offered to me seven years ago, when I had no thoughts of changing my situation, and she is to the fore, yet. Then, the other is the widow Morton, a genteel, snug, careful woman, who has long cast a wishful eye towards this place. Now, advise me as a friend, which of these two you think would be the best fitted for me. You need not boggle at Mrs. Morton’s religion, as if that would be a drawback ; for between ourselves, I like her the better for it. She would never want to go to confession, nor waste my substance in feeding idle

vagabonds. Besides, to tell you a secret, I have thoughts of turning Protestant myself."

Whether this was said in jest or earnest, Fogarth could not collect from his manner. He however resolved to suppose it the mere effusion of a playful imagination, and answered gaily,

" Neither one or other of the ladies shall, with my good will, be mistress of this house ; as I mean to keep you in my own family. There is my niece Matty Eames setting her cap at you, and I will poison the first woman that interferes with her right."

Dillon's countenance suddenly assumed an expression of such deep and dark malevolence that the smile which Sylvester had forced into his service, quickly vanished from his lips ; and though his moral or religious feelings could not easily be shocked by any common exhibition of wickedness, yet he felt a cold shudder run through all his frame as Dillon poured forth the most blasphemous imprecations against himself, if ever he forgave his daughter, or regarded her any longer as his child, farther than by allowing her a small maintenance sufficient to keep her from want, but not enough to leave her any thing to squander on the priests.

" The mountebank robbers," he continued in

the same strain of violence, “ shall not meet with two fools in my family. One shilling of my property shall never be in her possession to find its way into their pockets. Sooner than there should be the smallest chance of that, I would leave all I am worth in the world to build churches. I have now nothing more to say to you,” he said, waving his hand to his daughter, “ but to order you to quit my house ; for, under this roof, you will never sleep again. The car shall set you down at your aunt’s, in Oranard, and then you may take your own course for the future.”

He turned to leave the room, but Fogarth put his hand upon his arm to detain him. “ You are acting very rashly,” he began. “ When you cool, you will be sorry for it. Though Miss Dillon has acted imprudently, yet”.....

“ I know what you are going to say,” interrupted Dillon, “ and I confess I was too hasty. After bestowing her on you, I have no right to controul her motions. Take her, then, again, I say, with—my blessing—the only fortune she shall ever get from me.”

Fogarth’s position was by no means enviable. He had persuaded Margaret to believe his attachment to be as disinterested as it was un-

changeable ; often wished that she had not a penny, or that her father would permit their immediate union, and keep his money to himself. After such protestations—all of them, too, of late occurrence—it would be distressingly awkward to reject the lady's hand, when offered. But then, to accept it with nothing in it, involved consequences never dreamed of in his philosophy. To decide in a moment he felt was hazardous ; to hesitate too long, equally so. Being however in full possession of his calculating faculties, he set them to work on the instant. By a rapid mental process, he added, multiplied, subtracted, and divided all the changes, chances, and probabilities on both sides. As for Dillon's most solemn oaths, they weighed but little in his calculation. He was aware they would be no longer obligatory than his convenience, or interest, or even fancy, dictated. His daughter therefore was not necessarily disinherited because he had sworn it. But the matrimonial project was a startlingly ugly feature in the case. The inclinations of the two fair objects of his tender regards were matter of public notoriety ; and if a marriage with either should take place, Margaret's exclusion from any share in her father's property was certain. These thoughts passed through his politic

brain, in an inconceivably short time, considering their extent and intricacy ; it was long enough however, to mark an indecision keenly painful to one of the parties observing him, and maliciously gratifying to the other.

“ Why, man !” exclaimed Dillon with affected surprise, “ What has come over you ? you are not half as brisk as I expected, after me behaving so handsomely. Have I not given up all my right and title in that girl to you ? and what more do you want ? Isn’t she a fortune in herself ?”

“ I’m no match for you, once you begin bantering,” said Fogarth, endeavouring to look lively. “ You know you always put me down when that fit takes you, so I won’t answer you one word now. In the evening I will call here again, to have a little rational discourse with you.”

“ But won’t you take your wife with you, in the mean time for fear of accidents ?” persisted Dillon, who enjoyed his confusion as much as his daughter’s disappointment. “ The car can drop her at your lodgings, instead of going to Ora-nard.”

“ Nonsense ! nonsense !” cried Fogarth pettishly. “ I told you I will talk with you in the evening, when you will be disposed to listen to reason.”

“To save you trouble, Mr. Fogarth,” said Margaret, “I think it but fair to tell you that you need not interest yourself about me or my affairs in any discourse you may have with my father now, or at any other time. Whatever my lot may be, you have nothing to do with it. We are strangers to one another from this moment; and I would not look upon the person as meaning me friendship, who would remind me that we were ever acquainted.”

“You are as hasty as your father,” said Fogarth, still retaining presence of mind not to commit himself, “and I have good cause to be offended in my turn. For what have I said, or what have I done, to hear such language from your lips?”

“No matter, Mr. Fogarth. You are better pleased to hear it, than I am to speak it. I did not know you before—No,” she added bitterly—“I did not; for I was fool enough to believe you liked me for myself; and that if all the world looked black upon me, I was sure of kind treatment from you. I am ashamed to confess how it wrings my heart to find I was mistaken. But, it is all over between us now. Rich or poor, I will never share my lot with you. I freely release you from your promise. I leave you at liberty

Q

to please yourself, wherever your fancy may guide you."

"I repeat it again, Miss Margaret," said her lover, "that I have more reason to be offended with you, than you have to find fault with me."

"Let it be so," she answered haughtily. "I give you the full benefit of that, or any other excuse for falsehood and treachery towards me, if you require one; and I promise never to contradict it. You need say no more," she added impatiently, seeing him about to speak. "My mind is made up, and nothing shall change it; so is yours too, and it as unlikely to alter while I am in poverty and destitution."

She then turned away from him, and approaching her father, entreated him in the humblest and most affecting manner to forgive her, at least so far, as to permit her remaining under his protection, even if he would not see or speak to her. But he repulsed her with every mark of the most virulent hatred; and peremptorily commanding her to leave the house within an hour, called for his horse, and without taking leave of Sylvester, rode unceremoniously away. Poor Margaret, assisted by her two maids, whose clamorous grief for the misfortune of their young mistress could be heard at a pretty considerable distance, began

to prepare for her departure ; and the attorney, seeing that his presence was undesired, slunk away in the most unostentatious manner.

A ride of four miles had a soothing effect upon the perturbed spirits of Simon Dillon. Not that his animosity to Father Gurteen and his clerical brethren was in the least abated ; or that any compunctions visitings of conscience for his unnatural treatment of his only child, was melting him into tenderness ; but he reflected that a display of impotent anger would only subject him to the ridicule of all parties, and he therefore resolved to exert such a controul over his temper as would restrain it within the bounds of decorum. What a man strenuously determines to do, rarely fails of being accomplished ; accordingly, by the time he arrived at Miss Dickinson's house his manner was so composed, and his mind apparently in so placid a frame, that nobody could have suspected the nature of the feelings rankling at his heart.

His visits were in general welcome to the old lady, as they seldom occurred unless when he came to pay his rent ; but such a pleasing occurrence being at that time impossible, she was rather disconcerted at his appearance, suspecting it to be connected with the election, a subject

which was every day becoming more and more distasteful to her. Teresa was also far from rejoicing at his presence. Since the visit to Prior Abbey, Miss Dickinson had cautiously abstained from making the slightest allusion to her four votes, or anything connected with them; and indeed shewed altogether such an unnatural disinclination to political discussion, that even Tom, with whom she was in the habit of chatting confidentially every evening in the kitchen, on the occurrences of the day, was obliged to confine his communications to the most uninteresting and common-place topics. It was nevertheless evident that she was still in a state of great and harrassing indecision; and as the election was to commence in three days, there were strong grounds for apprehension that any influence, strongly and suddenly exerted on the side of her inclinations could not fail of success. Now, Simon Dillon was one of the most likely persons in the world to succeed in such an undertaking; for, notwithstanding his low origin, his punctuality in paying his rent, together with the most outrageous flattery, had gained him a very high place in Miss Dickinson's estimation. It was therefore with feelings very nearly bordering on despair, that Teresa heard him in a few minutes

after his entrance, request a private conference ; intimating at the same time, that he had a matter of great importance to submit to Miss Fiddy, whose reading and knowledge would help an ignorant man like him to escape the traps and snares that a wicked world was laying in the way of the simple and innocent.

When they were left alone, he entered upon a long preliminary discourse, consisting of professions of respect and esteem for herself and her forefathers, under whose reign he had, he was proud to say, risen from nothing to some little responsibility in the country ; and to prove his gratitude, he protested being ready at that time, or at all times, to shed the last drop of his blood for a dog of the name of Dickinson, if it could claim kindred with the family of Ardcarnacarrighy. He then launched out into a strain of very high-toned morality ; descanted largely upon the impropriety of robbery, perjury, under-hand dealing, and undutifulness to parents—all which misdemeanours he felt sure Miss Fiddy would be the last woman living to tolerate.

“ I give you my word, Simon,” answered the lady, when he paused for a reply, “ you speak what is very proper, and what is becoming in a tenant who knows me and my dealings ; and I

have no objection to your saying that much of me any day you please. And more than that, you have my full permission to tell the whole world that I never approved of any bad vice, nor never will, while my judgment tells me there is no good in it."

"I knew that so well, Miss Fiddy," he replied "that I spoke them very words not passing four hours back, to one who would face me down, that if Sir Andrew was to rob the bank, you would lend him a helping hand. Tut ! man, says I, you never were so out in the whole course of your days. Though Miss Fiddy and he are come of the same stock, she would cut off her hand sooner nor join him in his desperate plundering of the motherless orphan."

"I am obliged to you, Simon, for clearing my character so sensibly ; but I think you might have put in a word for Sir Andrew, when that impertinent fellow, whoever he was, made so free with his name. What has a gentleman like him to do with plundering ? What could a man of his substance care about the little penny he could get by all the fatherless or motherless orphans in Ireland ?"

"Care or not care, he does it," said Dillon, with a melancholy shake of the head, "as I know

to my cost : for, Oh ! Miss Fiddy !" covering his face with his hands, " I am a poor, desolate, ruined, unfortunate man this day, by his covetousness and bare-faced wantonness."

Miss Dickinson was really shocked, and demanded an instant explanation of this most extraordinary piece of intelligence, which her tenant was nothing loth to impart. He detailed all the arts practised upon his daughter to deprive her of the little trifle left her by her grandmother, on which she depended entirely for support, with various additions of his own imagining to increase the enormity of the transaction ; and pathetically concluded by adjuring her to shew her disapprobation of such notorious and unchristianable swindling, by withholding her countenance and support from all its aiders and abettors, whether rich or poor, Roman or Protestant.

Contrary to her usual habit of at once answering the last sentence that reached her ear, without any reference to the matter principally under consideration. Miss Dickinson now remained silent, pondering over the substance of Dillen's communication, and endeavouring to bring all the facts plainly before her mind's eye. The exertion evidently cost her some trouble, but she persisted in it with such straight-forward

resolution, that in a very few minutes she found herself capable of speaking to the point with considerable clearness and decision.

“ What you have told me, Simon, is very odd indeed, and I give you my word, it has an ugly appearance. I must say too, that I expected better from Mr. Gurteen, who, I always, considered a proper man—in his way—and one who would give good advice about keeping money, seeing how by all accounts he knows the value of it. But what I dont see is, how Sir Andrew’s name is to be called in question at all—a gentleman who is not able to put a foot under him, with that unfortunate gout in his *two legs*! And moreover, Simon, I would not believe the Lord Lieutenant if he said he robbed him of a brass button, for he is above such meanness ; and whatever was in my mind before, I am beginning to think now, how it becomes all his friends to stand by him, when his character is taken away by evil-minded people.”

“ I expected all that and nothing else from you, Miss Fiddy, from your proper judgment. There is not a more honorable gentleman living than Sir Andrew, nor one that would go farther to serve a friend, if he had one. But he is too innocent, Miss. He is too innocent to dale with the

sarpins about him ; and as you say feelingly, if you and others of your station, prudence, and edication, don't stand between him and destruction, his name will be a by-word in the county for this hundred years to come."

" Simon, you may believe me, it gives me great pleasure to hear you speak so sensibly ; and now, will you tell me what I ought to do, so as to disappoint his enemies ?"

" The only way, Miss, to give him a surfeit of them, is to leave him in their hands for this turn, and to have no call to him at all. He will then see how badly advised he was to be led by robbers and perjurors ; and he will banish them all from about him for ever, so his character will be cleared, and he will be so commended, and so thought of that he will have the ball at his own foot from that out ; but if he gets into parliament now, the poor innocent gentleman will never recover it. The very dogs will bark at his shadow ; and all belonging to him will have to sneak about, holding down their heads, for fear of looking an honest man straight in the face."

" Oh ! dear, dear," exclaimed Miss Dickinson despairingly, " and has he no friend to put him on his guard ? Will no Christian warn the poor gentleman against his enemies ?"

“ He is so tangled with their witchcraft that warning won’t do,” answered her tenant. “ He must be got out of their hands by stronger means.” Then softening his voice to the most pathetic tone, he proceeded, “ Miss Fiddy, since the hour I came under your dominion, I never did a hand’s turn without your advice. Neither priest or minister dare come between us and my duty to you. Even at this time, when the nearest friends are driving contrary ways, and the clargy cursing from morning till night, I still was staunch. Not an answer would I give to one of them, but only this. Wait, says I, till I get my orders from the gentlewoman that is over me. What she bids me do, that I will do; so don’t bother me any more with your nonsense. Well, I am ready to keep my word, if you command me. What’s more, I am willing to die on the spot, to serve you. But, oh, Miss Fiddy, as you are a christianable woman; as you have discretion above the common, and as you have a feeling and a tender heart, don’t desire me or your other poor tenants to go again our conscience by upholding Sir Andrew and his comrade in roguery.”

“ If you mean the new gentleman,” she answered warmly, “ that Terasa says, goes by the name of Thady, he is no comrade to Sir An-

drew. I disparage nobody, but one can't help making a differ, when there is a differ ; and the Shrivels, you well know, Simon, are a family noted for genteel names, such as the royal family need not be ashamed of."

" True, true, true, Miss Fiddy ! and then, for the sake of Sir Andrew, and for the sake of Sir Thomas, and Sir James, that went before him, and for your own sake, and for the sake of the poor underlings, that are bound to look up to you—shew that you wont countenance villainy, ingratitude, and vulgarity. I can say no more now," he added, mournfully, but this, " that if you bid me give my vote contrary to my conscience, I will not refuse you. That it will break my heart, is sure ; but no matter for that, I owe you every duty, and I will pay it even to ordering my coffin, if nothing else will satisfy you."

Miss Dickinson became greatly affected. " You may believe me, Simon," she said, " that I never broke a heart in all my life, nor will I begin now ; and if you never order your coffin till I bid you, it will be long before you have occasion for it. May I trouble you to open the door, and tell Abby to call Miss Hamilton, as I want to say a word to her in your presence. Terasa," she

began, when the young lady entered, “ my mind is made up. Indeed, I may say it was so from the day we dined at the Abbey ; Mr. Prior made it plain to me from history and my own conscience, that I ought to banish friendship, and that I ought to do what was stubborn and hard. Still I was uneasy, reflecting on the intimacy that always was between the Shrivils and the Dickins-sons ; and I resolved not to open my lips, till I could clear myself to Mr. Barrymore of having no ill-will to Sir Andrew, and no bad meaning to any one ; but Simon Dillon, is so cast down that to save him useless fretting, I will speak out at once. Therefore, I take you to witness, Terasa, in presence of this honest man, that I promise my four votes to be equally divided between the honorable Captain Bindon and Mr. Ambrosse of Curnahoo Castle ; and I authorize you, Simon, to warn Ody Cuffe, and the two Lloyds, to take pattern by you, and to behave like tenants.”

“ The Lloyds will jump for joy when they get that message,” said Simon Dillon, rising to go away ; “ and as for Ody, I have a halter round his neck, to pull him any airt I please, though the priest was tugging hard the contrary way—A good morning to you both, ladies—After all,” he concluded, as he opened the door, and made his

last and lowest obeisance, “ though there is plenty of deceit and ingratitude in the world, it is a comfort for a poor innocent man like me to know that I have a friend in this house—one that knows what to do, and what to say, and what to advise, and what to”—

The last word was lost in the creaking of the hinges. Miss Dickinson had however heard enough to increase her respect for her tenant, whose praises occupied the fifteen minutes which she bestowed on Teresa, before she adjourned to the kitchen, to inform her domestics that the die was cast.

## CHAPTER XII.

ABBY, whose ear had been in close contact with the key-hole from the moment that Miss Hamilton left the room, was, as may be supposed, in full possession of the information which her mistress thought proper to impart, by preparatory hints, being apprehensive that a sudden disclosure might have an unpleasant effect upon her nervous system. But her hints were thrown away : Abby was unaccountably dull : she could see no differ between one tenant and another—they all had an eye to their own interests. She always thought Simon Dillon was a big lump of a man—that was all—she always considered that parents were more to blame than children, whatever was between them. She did not care who robbed, or if all Ireland did nothing else from morning till night, provided they let her alone ; and she was altogether so uninterested about every thing, and so superior to the common or uncommon occurrences of this deceiving world,

that Miss Dickinson was obliged to come to the point at once, and state the mere facts, without any of the comments and remarks which, in accordance with her usual style of narration, should have accompanied them. A long pause ensued, for Abby, who was literally, or rather metaphorically, boiling with rage, could not venture to speak, lest she should say more than was consistent with prudence ; and after waiting a reasonable time, to allow her to give her opinion, if she had any to give, her mistress again addressed her.

“ I am afraid it is going to rain another heavy shower,” she said, “ and if it overtakes Simon on the new line, where there is no shelter, the poor man will get a severe ducking.”

“ The sorrah pity him,” growled Mrs. Sessnan. “ I suppose he is neither sugar nor salt, that a drop of water would melt him.”

“ Excuse me, Abby,” said her mistress gravely ; “ but that is not a feeling word in a woman come to your years. We ought to be sorry for a drownded rat, much more a creature of flesh and blood ; and Simon Dillon is a man that—in his way—ought to be mentioned with respect.”

“ Respect !” exclaimed the housekeeper, un-

able any longer to restrain her indignation. “ I would despise myself into the kennel, before I would respect his father’s son.—He ! the”—

But we shall not follow Mrs. Sessnan in her philippic against Dillon. It was a strong and animated, and adorned with some figures of speech, which, however classical and expressive, were rather stronger than ears polite would wish to listen to. The Irish vocabulary of abusive epithets is very copious ; indeed, it appears almost inexhaustible, at least, with any kind of prudent management ; but her great revenge had stomach for them all, and more than all that it could afford ; so that before her wrath had reached its highest pitch, the store was exhausted, and she was obliged to call in the aid of curses and maledictions to fill up the measure of her resentment. Accordingly, himself—soul and body—his family, his substance, his name, his memory, were again and again devoted to the powers of evil ; and all the elements adjured to take the part of outraged innocence, and visit the offender with swift and condign punishment.

Miss Dickinson was easily alarmed, or, as she expressed it, cowed, by any violence of temper ; and in general made a hasty retreat from the

kitchen, when her servants took the liberty of scolding each other in her presence, which had not unfrequently occurred before Teresa Hamilton came to reside with her. But there are provocations which the most timid nature will not easily submit to ; and Abby's outrageous liberty of speech offended her so seriously, that alarm gave way to indignation, and she commanded her to be silent with a tone of such high authority, that Naty Foody, who had just entered the kitchen with a creel of turf on his back, stood stock still, in the door way, with eyes and mouth opened to their fullest extent.

“ Woman !” began the lady of Ardcarnacarrihy, but suddenly stopping and pausing for a few seconds, she continued, “ Abby—Abby Sessnan ! For if you forget yourself, it is not my part to do so, by calling any of God’s creatures out of their name. I say, therefore, Abby—you have been for fifteen years eating my bread and taking my wages, and I should be sorry we parted after this length of time in anger or ill-will ; but if you don’t humble yourself this minute for your indiscreet expressions in my presence, when no privation was offered you, you will never darken my door again.”

Abby burst into tears, whether from passion

or contrition we are not able to say ; her mistress however leaned to the more amiable opinion, and while the housekeeper sobbed behind her apron, and rocked herself on the stool, where she had sunk down, proceeded to comfort her under her affliction.

“ I am glad to see you are sorry, Abby, though you may believe me, I am sorry for anything that would grieve you. You ought never to let passion get the better of you again, Abby ; for it is a very foolish thing, and more likely to lose friends than to make them.”

“ If I lose your friendship, Miss Fiddy,” said Mrs. Sessnan, shedding abundance of tears, “ it is my misfortune, and not my fault ; for if I did pray a bad prayer for that man, it was for your sake—it was grieving about you, when I knew what destruction may come upon us all by his meddling and making.”

“ I can’t see your meaning, Abby ; nor I can’t see what premunire poor Simon Dillon is likely to bring us into.”

“ Oh ! Miss Fiddy,” exclaimed Abby mournfully, “ you don’t know what is coming on the world. Things won’t be let to go on as before-time. The clargy, one and all, are bent on getting the upper hand, and once they begin in earnest,

what is to stop them? I beg your excuse, Miss, for seeming to reflect on your profession, but you know your ministers can't work miracles, and how will they be able to contradict them that can?"

" That is very true, indeed, Abby; but you know I never was a friend to contradiction; and besides, our ministers not being given to drink like the priests, how could they do cures and things of that kind?"

" They won't be kep down any longer," continued Abby, turning a deaf ear to the last remark; " and I trimble in my skin to think what may be hanging over us all by that self-willed man. Oh! what would become of us at all," she added, wringing her hands, " if we're doomed for this morning's work to the same misfortune that overtook poor Nancy Lanigan?"

" You may trust me, Abby," said Miss Dickinson, very seriously, " there is no fear of that. You and I may defy all the priests in Ireland, if they were reading their offices against us while they had a breath in their body."

Abby had nothing to say in contradiction to this assertion, and finding that supernatural judgments from the Romish priesthood, were not regarded with the respect she hoped, quickly

shifted her ground, and took up a more sentimental strain.

“ It’s an altered world any how, when people turn again their own friends, and strike hands with strangers. Who would think they would ever live to see the day when one of the name of Shrivel would have to complain that they were left in the lurch by the head of the family of Ard-carnacarrighy ?”

“ If you had read as much as I did in my time, Abby,” said her mistress, “ you would see that the world is not so much altered as you surmise. All the Roman history is taken up with one story worse nor another about people persecuting their nearest friends, when it was right to be unnatural.

“ And, may be,” answered Abby, tartly, “ if there was a history wrote about the Protestants as well as the Romans, there might be worse nor that laid to their charge.”

“ Abby,” said Miss Dickinson, moving towards the door, “ you are an unread woman—which I don’t say to your discredit—only to remind you that you are in error. I was not drawing comparisons between Romans and Protestants, I was only thinking of the Roman history—a very proper and a very instructive book, without one

word of religion in it. But that is neither here nor there. I will tell Tom all about it, when he comes into his supper ; and you will see," she added, leaving the kitchen, "that a sensible boy like him will understand, and will agree how it is all for the best."

As supper time, however, drew near, Miss Dickinson became somewhat uneasy lest Tom might not see matters exactly in the light she wished, and she began to regret having insisted on Teresa accepting an invitation to tea at the Glebe, as she was thus left to bide alone the pelting of what might be a pitiless storm, if he disapproved of the proceedings of the morning. Her fears were however soon dispelled on entering the kitchen. Her boys demeanour was particularly respectful ; and instead of lolling at his ease on the settle-bed, as was his usual habit, he was actively employed in doing various little jobs, quite out of his line, such as washing potatoes, carrying turf, &c.

" Why are you slaving yourself with them things after your hard days work ?" at length asked his mistress. " Why don't you call Naty, and make him do his business ?"

" Oh ! no matter, Miss," said Tom meekly, " It is my business to do what is to be done when there is nobody else to do it."

“ You were always a willing and a ready boy, Tom ; your worst enemy must say that of you. But it is not fair to spur a free horse to death, as the saying is—so sit down—and let Naty do his own business when he comes in.”

Tom looked inquiringly at Abby, and Abby looked resolutely at Tom, both being apparently unwilling to speak, and Miss Dickinson who began to fear that some accident had happened to the ungainly turf boy, became so particular in her inquiries, that Abby after one or two shrugs and nods from her fellow servant expressive of his disinclination to become spokesman on the occasion, was obliged to confess that Naty had quit his service at a moment’s warning, and had commissioned her to receive his balance of wages to the amount of three and eleven pence, which he would send for when he wanted it.”

“ You surprise me greatly, Abby,” said Miss Dickinson ; “ for I ever considered that boy, though he was awkward, to have gratitude in his nature ; and I thought if he had a few words with you, or Tom, as he often had, he would forgive and forget like another.”

Again, there was a pantomimic interchange of ideas between the man and the maid, but Tom was so obstinately bent on silence, that Mrs.

Sessnan was at last under the necessity of explaining the whole matter from beginning to end without any assistance from him.

“ As to words,” she began, “ I could certify before the quarter sessions, that a thing of the kind didn’t happen for many a long day ; and that three dummies could not live more friendly together than this kitchen. No. Miss Fiddy, I won’t belie any body. I will speak the truth, supposing the door opened of itself to bid me folly the road. Yourself knows as well as I can tell you, that if the gossoon hasn’t right wit, he is cute and penetrating, and sharp, with more thought for his sowl nor some of a lofty degree. Heaven pity them, and turn their hearts. You know, besides, Miss, and I say it before Tom Mullaheeran there, that it was from your own lips he heard it; it was no whimper of mine, for I scorn to reapeate the most unsignified word that is spoke in my presence—so, the minute you quit the place, instead of going to wash the dinner, he put his hat on his head, and with the tears starting from his two eyes, he said, Mrs. Sessnan, this is no place for me or any other Roman after that. The mistress has got into hands that will be heavy on us all, if we don’t take care. I leave her my blessing on my two knees, but life

is sweet, so there's an end of it. Then looking the very moral of a pity, he swore a great oath that he would never throw another sod of turf behind the fire, and he marched off without looking after him, though I shouted him back while I had a shout in me."

"The dear help me," exclaimed Miss Dickinson, "but I am afraid these unfortunate four votes will lose me every friend I have in the world. That boy that I took from the street, when he had neither house nor home, nor a bit to put in his head, see how he turns his back on me like the prodigal son, within in the parlour there; and may be others are preparing to do the same. Well, it can't be helped—I did what I did from a pure motive, and not for the lucre of gain; so if I come to loss, I must put up with it."

"Ah! Miss Fiddy!" said Tom, in his most persuasive tone, "Why should you come to loss at all? Supposing you were tricked into an unbecoming action. What's to hinder you behaving proper, when you are made sensible? A foolish word is asy unsaid, and Simon Dillon, when he cools, will be the first to thank you, for any little alteration of your mind."

"Tom Mullaheeran," she answered, drawing

herself up into the most rigid perpendicularity ; “ In the thirteen years and a half that you drove my car, and sot by that fire, when did you know me to say and unsay ? When did you find that my word passed to a beggar was not as sure as if I was bound by an oath ? You forget yourself by proffering an advice of that sort to me. I will not break my promise, let what will come of it. No ; not if you and Abby were to take shares with that wilful Naty. I would be sorry, no doubt, but, you may believe me, I would not flinch from my conscience.”

Both man and maid assured her that no such idea ever entered their heads ; that nothing she could say or do, let it be ever so bad, could influence them to desert her ; and protested that their respect for her character was increased by her adherence to her promise, though it might injure her in the opinion of ignorant people, who did not know her as well as they did.

Miss Dickinson was pleased and gratified. She repaid all their praises by a long eulogium on their good qualities, and in conclusion desired Tom to sit down on a stool opposite to her, till she should inform him of all her reasons for deciding against Sir Andrew, which she premised were so strong and proper, that he would acknow-

ledge she could not have acted in any other way that would so fully prove her friendly feelings towards him. Tom was most respectfully attentive during the long narration that followed. It was indeed so long, that Abby, who had got a private hint from him to withdraw, and had perched herself upon the last step of the ladder, leading to her sleeping apartment, where she could hear without being seen, began to lose all patience, and was on the point of descending, when Miss Fiddy came to a full stop, and the steward, after one or two loud hems to clear his voice, took up the conversation.

“ As I said before, Miss Fiddy, and as I will always say, whoever says to the contrary—you couldn’t go beyant the advice you got, and I hope it will turn out well for us all. Any how, Mr. Dillon is sure of his game, he is a long-sighted man, and it is the best of his play to have his landlord, that is to be, on his side. I don’t fault him for making a friend in time; but I hope it won’t offend you, if I wish he may have a long day to wait before the Knights of Derryfane will be masters of Ardcarnacarrighy.”

“ I give you my word, Tom, if you did not speak so sensible, I would say you were not in a proper condition; for how could a man in sobriety talk

all that nonsense ? What has come over you, or what do you mean by joining Ardearnacarrighy and the people of Derryfane in one breath ?"

" I beg your pardon, Miss, over and over again," said Tom, pretending to be greatly alarmed, " only don't be angry, and don't betray me to them, that looks on me already with an evil eye, only because I study your interest. Don't, for the love of pity, draw their malice on me, and I promise never to drop another word about it, if they were to wreck you out of house and land this very minute.

" You are under a mistake there, Tom. They could not do it. They were mad to get a bit of the estate in my grandfather's life time, and they were disappointed. The law gave it in our favour, and there is no fear that they will try it again."

" But what would make them go to law, Miss ?" asked Tom, innocently, " if you are willing to make it all over peaceably to them ; for isn't Miss Terasa to come in for all you have after your death ?"

" She is indeed, Tom, because she has the best right to the estate, being my nearest kin by the father's side, but what has that to do with the Knights or their bad devices ?"

“ Why, Miss, may be I am making too free to meddle with family secrets, but I only say what I seen with my own eyes, that she is to be married to Mr. Arthur Knight, the young gentleman that drove you home from the Abbey, you mind.”

This was a piece of intelligence that roused all Miss Dickinson’s feelings into a state of unusual excitement. For some minutes she was incapable of thinking or speaking coherently, and many more elapsed before she had gained sufficient composure to request from Mullaheeran a detail of the circumstances which gave rise to such an extraordinary report, protesting, at the same time, that if there was any truth in it, she did not know what desperate thing she might be tempted to do in the disposal of her property.

Tom’s heart beat high with pleasure at the effect of his disclosure which he had been meditating for some days. He, however, concealed his satisfaction under an air of sympathizing condolence with his injured mistress, while he proceeded to relate all that he knew, and much that he did not know, respecting the affair in question. The interview that he witnessed from behind the hedge, formed the grand article in his narrative, and he made the most of it, embellishing it with

many little incidents of a purely imaginative character. He acknowledged that he was mistaken at the time, as to the name of the gentleman, supposing him to be another entirely ; and that it was only when he saw him the day of the accident, he discovered what family he belonged to. Since then, he heard plenty about the courtship. In fact, the country talked of nothing else for ever so long, though he was a stranger to it, being one that kept no company, and never listened to chat. Their friendship, by all accounts, was of a long standing, and they would have been married two years and a half ago, only that his father threatened to banish him if he made such a poor match. But since she was sure of the estate, the whole family was lost for want of her, and old Knight was counting the minutes till he could plant the bog of Dun-Alt, and shut out all the lovely view from the hall-door of Ardcarnacarrihy.

“ I have now told you all, Miss,” he added—“ what may transport me yet, when they step into your shoes, if you let on that I put you on your guard. After all, what do I care for all they can do to me, provided they can lay nothing to my charge, only consideration for you.”

“ Depend upon it, Tom, your name shall never

be mentioned by me to your disparagement, for I know your good wishes to me. But, oh ! dear me ! dear me !” she continued, with great emotion, “what a world it is to live in!—To think of my nearest friend—my own father’s great grand niece—she that I left all I had in the world to—she that Mr. Barrymore speaks so well of, and that can read so beautiful, and talk so cheerful—to have her underminding me, and plotting again me with the only enemies that ever tried to do my family an injury !”

“ You may well say, plotting, Miss ; for nothing else has been going on in this house, since she put her foot inside it ; and though I said nothing, it is myself had the uneasy mind, looking at your carelessness. I accuse nobody, Miss Fiddy, but it will never leave my head that there was not foul play some-how-or-other that day going to the Abbey—what else would make the horse so rusty and unmanageable ? and do you mind how she would have the reins in her own hand, and how nimble she was to save herself when she backed the car into the gripe, with you on it. It may all be nothing but my own folly, fretting about you, only, as I said before, I am dubious, and I can’t help it.”

Though it would be doing injustice to Miss

Dickinson to say that she for an instant suspected Teresa of being engaged in a conspiracy to take away her life by violent means, yet other suspicions scarcely less odious began to crowd thick into her mind. If her death was not absolutely determined on, it must, at least, be wished for, and instead of possessing, as she fondly hoped, a friend on whose kindness and tenderness she could rely, when sickness or the infirmities of age came upon her, she found herself in the hands of an artful, selfish being, who felt no interest in her, except what arose from the hope of her speedy decease. These considerations, joined to the inevitable fate of Ardcarnacarrighy, if it ever came into Teresa's possession, agitated her to such a degree, that she was unable to reap any benefit from Tom's moral reflections poured forth with great fluency, and when Abby thought proper to make her appearance, with the hope of being called upon for her advice on such a momentous occasion, she retired to her sitting-room, desiring not to be disturbed, as she wished to think a great deal, before she ventured to say what she might do, or rather, what she ought to do.

Two hours elapsed, and she was still engaged in thinking, without coming to any determination

when Teresa, happily unconscious of what had occurred in her absence, returned home in good spirits, and in a very communicative mood, having spent a remarkably pleasant evening at the Glebe. She did not at first remark the unusual coldness with which her greetings were received, but proceeded to give Mrs. Barrymore's kind messages and regrets at not being favoured with the pleasure of her company.

"I am greatly obliged to Mrs. Barrymore," said the old lady, assuming an air of state, "for her good wishes, as I hope I always was and always will be to, *rale* friends, such as I believe *her* to be, though I may be mistaken in others."

"You would have been greatly pleased," continued the young lady, "with a conversation between Mr. Barrymore and Mr. Knight—I should rather say, an argument—for Mr. Knight advanced one or two strange opinions, similar to what he advocated at Prior Abbey, and which Mr. Barrymore combated so successfully, that in the end he was obliged to confess himself in the wrong."

"I have no doubt that he was in the wrong," replied the old lady, still more grandly, "the wonder would be if he ever could be in the right. But, you will excuse me, Miss Hamilton, if I

don't wish to be entertained with Mr. Knight's sayings or doings, or with the sayings and doings of any of the name."

Teresa was unable to account for this sudden change in her feelings towards the curate; for since the day of the overturn, she had often expressed a very favourable opinion of him. On looking at her attentively, she perceived that her face was considerably flushed, and her breathing quick and interrupted.

"I fear you are not well, Ma'am," she said, "You look a little feverish—perhaps you are sitting up too late."

"Thank you, Miss Hamilton, for your anxiety about my health," said the old lady, bowing so low, as almost to touch the table before which she was sitting—"but I am very well—never was better—I am sorry to disappoint you, Miss Hamilton—but truth compels me to say that I am very, very well."

"Why should I be disappointed at that?" asked Teresa, who began to entertain a suspicion that her kinswoman's wits were not exactly in their right place.

"People who are eager to wear dead men's shoes," replied Miss Dickinson, "Have odd fan-

cies, which they can't help—you understand me, Miss Hamilton."

"No, indeed, I do not, Ma'am—I can only suppose that I have unconsciously given offence: and if so, I assure you it has been quite unintentional."

This was said with an ingenuousness that almost softened Miss Dickinson into kindness. She dropped her supercilious air and attitude, and began speaking in her natural tone, though still labouring under considerable agitation.

"Teresa, I once thought—that is, when Tom Sheridan died—that is, you, who I considered—Oh! dear me!—I had best come to it once for all—is it true? or can it be true, that you have promised yourself and the estate, that may be yours after my death, to one of them covetous, grabbing Knights of Derryfane?"

Teresa was struck dumb at this home and most unexpected question. Her heart beat so violently as to render respiration difficult, and she remained silent as much from inability as disinclination to speak. Miss Dickinson after waiting a competent time to receive an answer, and finding that none was vouchsafed, resumed her state, and relapsing into unamiability, said,

"I interfere with nobody's private affairs,

when they don't interfere with mine. So you must excuse me, Miss Hamilton, if I say that I do not approve of young women, living in my house, making themselves the common talk by galloping out in the clouds of the night to meet bachelors."

" You wrong me, Ma'am," said Teresa, recovering her voice in a moment. " I guess at the circumstance to which you allude, and I assure you that my one interview with Mr. Arthur Knight was altogether accidental. I had not seen him for more than a year previous to that evening, and I did not even know that he was in the neighbourhood."

" You knew more afterwards, Miss Hamilton," said the old lady, laying a strong emphasis on every word to mark her perfect comprehension of all the ramifications of the conspiracy so artfully planned against her, " And I know something to my cost—the two shafts of my unfortunate car are living instances of—of—you understand me, Miss Hamilton."

What connexion the broken shafts could have with her or her lover, was a mystery to Teresa. She did not however try to unravel it; but as the best means of soothing the old lady's displeasure, she at once proceeded to make a candid dis-

closure of her Derryfane perplexities. Our readers are already in possession of the principal facts, we shall therefore only give an outline of her confessions.

Her acquaintance with Arthur Knight, she said, had commenced about two years before at the house of a friend, to whose kindness she was indebted for an asylum on her father's death. The gentleman, foolishly,—as every body who heard the story agreed—soon fell in love; and the lady unfortunately not being much wiser, was prevailed upon to confess the soft impeachment. His family, on being made acquainted with the matter, not only objected to the connexion, as in the course of true love generally occurs—they also expressed their displeasure against the fair delinquent in terms of superfluous indignation, and the match was by the way of being entirely broken off. Whether all parties acquiesced in this final resolve, Teresa did not precisely aver, but she asserted that there had been no intercourse between her, and any individual connected with Derryfane, from that period, till within the last month, when the elder Mr. Knight communicated to her through the medium of the friend formerly mentioned, his full consent to her union with his son, on certain conditions to be specified

hereafter. To this conciliatory movement she had returned no answer, neither would vouchsafe to receive a letter from him to the same purport when presented by his son on the evening of their accidental meeting ; and concluded by relating the substance of the conversation which occurred at their last interview at Prior Abbey.

“ I give you my word, Terasa,” said Miss Dickinson, when her cousin had ceased speaking, “ You have taken a weight from my heart, and I am happy to be able to say, that in my judgment you acted very proper—as proper as anything—only I can’t help thinking that though you were quite right not to be uncivil to the young man, yet, it is a pity you did not tell him at once, that if there was not another in the world, you would not join yourself to that family.”

Teresa was silent, and Miss Dickinson continued, “ Indeed, leaving out their conduct about the bog of Dun-Alt, they are a family that in my day, were not considered on a footing with others. It is but lately they began to look up ; and it would break my heart if I thought that an acre of Ardcarnacarrighy would ever come into possession of one of the name. But now I am quite at ease, seeing your sperrit, and that you are as resolved against them all, root and branch, as myself.”

"I cannot deceive you, Miss Dickinson," said Teresa, after a short pause, "I esteem Mr. Arthur Knight very highly. His conduct towards me has been most generous and disinterested, and that at a time when I was poor—apparently, hopelessly poor and friendless."

"I am knocked all of a heap again," exclaimed the old lady, in a voice of utter dismay; "And it is out of my power to know what to think, or what to say, or what to believe. But I will come to the bottom of it, before I quit this chair.—So, one word for all, Teresa. Tell me the truth without speechifying. Are you only waiting for my death, to lavish the estate on them Knights of Derryfane?"

The young lady again remained silent, and Miss Dickinson, with increasing animation returned to the charge, reiterating the same question under a different form.

"I must have a plain answer, Miss Hamilton, so be pleased to say, would you, or would you not, supposing you were mistress of Ardcarnacarrihy—bestow it as your marriage portion upon that tall young man from Derryfane?"

"I would, Ma'am," answered Teresa, with a firm voice, though her frame shook with agitation.

"Then," said the old lady, rising to leave the

room, “you shall never”—she suddenly stopped, and after a moment’s hesitation, continued—“Rash promises may be repented, therefore I will say no more at present, only this, that I am disappointed in you, Terasa; and that the Knights of Derryfane have been a sore cross to me and my family—and that my will may be altered any day; and that I don’t think I can say my prayers this night as I ought; for all the bad thoughts that ever were in my heart are busy there now, and I am only afraid that I don’t want to get shut of them.”

## CHAPTER XIII.

THE day of the election at last arrived. From a very early hour hundreds of the peasantry had been pouring into the town, from all parts of the country, in obedience to the orders of the priests issued from their respective altars on the preceding Sunday, each man being provided with a stout oak or blackthorn-stick ; and before twelve o'clock, the principal street was occupied by a dense mob, through which the police and a troop of Dragoons found some difficulty in clearing a passage for the various vehicles bound for the Court house. Cheers or yells burst from the crowd, as individuals belonging to either party were recognised, but no glaring outrage was attempted, and the usual routine commenced at the hustings with less uproar and violence than was originally expected.

The high sheriff, a gentleman of large fortune, old family, and liberal principles, made a very excellent speech, delivered with dignity, or, as

the radical press expressed it, with a noble, high-mindedness. He professed the most perfect neutrality in his official capacity, and repelled with foul scorn any imputation of undue partiality that might be cast upon him by bigots, who could only judge him by their own narrow prejudices. He had however the gratification of believing that nothing of the kind was to be expected from any of the candidates on the present occasion, even from those to whose political opinions he might be unfortunately, though he must say, conscientiously opposed. They were gentlemen on whose honor and honorable feelings he placed the most implicit confidence, and he had not the slightest apprehension that they would suppose him capable of degrading the high office which he had the honor of filling, by becoming the organ of a party. Here he bowed to Captain Bindon and Mr. Ambrosse, who bowed most acquiescently in return, murmuring their full conviction of his fair and upright intentions.

The man in authority then resumed his speech, which embraced succinctly all the topics proper for the occasion, with a few that were considered, at least, by a part of his audience, as somewhat irrelevant; such as a glowing eulogium on the Romish priesthood, as the most valuable body of

men in the United Kingdom, and a very flattering encomium upon the County at large, which he represented as a scene of peaceful tranquillity, now and then it might be disturbed by some bad spirits, such as were unfortunately to be found every where, but whose example, he was happy to say, was not imitated to any considerable extent. He then proceeded to indulge the hope that the proceedings on this and the following days would be conducted with good humour and good feeling on both sides, that all asperity of language or violence of action should be carefully avoided, and concluded with many noble sentiments expressive of his high resolve to uphold the authority of the law, and to deal out even-handed justice firmly and impartially.

This speech was received with every demonstration of approval ; but a very different reception awaited Colonel Witherspoon, who next presented himself to their notice. His rising was the signal for an uproar of the most deafening kind, which lasted, without intermission, as long as the gallant Colonel was on his legs. Yells, groans, and hisses, completely drowned his voice, so that it could only be guessed by those at any distance from the chair, that he proposed Mr. Ambrosse, or that a gentleman who rose

immediately on his sitting down, seconded his motion.

The honourable Captain Bindon was next put in nomination by Mr. Prior, who was likewise hooted and hissed unsparingly during the very short period that he occupied public attention. He however went through the form very deliberately, and then resumed his seat, without betraying, as he hoped, by countenance or manner, the slightest annoyance at his uncourteous reception.

Mr. De Lyne, a Roman Catholic grazier, who had Normanized his name within the last few years ; his forefathers, at least, as many as he could count, being always designated Lynch, was greeted by hearty cheers, as he slowly advanced to the front of the platform. He was a middle-aged man, of placid deportment, and soft-toned voice ; well shaved, well brushed, gloved in lavender-coloured kidskin ; and altogether quite a credit to the cause he espoused. He began by saying that he would make no speech—his subject did not require the aid of eloquence to recommend it to every honest man's support. He had the honor, and he esteemed it a very high honor to propose Sir Andrew Shrivel as a fit and proper person to represent that County in

Parliament,—He regretted to say that temporary—and he rejoiced to say, *temporary* indisposition prevented him meeting his friends on this interesting occasion ; but his constituents might be assured that if he came off conqueror in that contest, no personal consideration should ever be allowed to interfere with the duty he owed to his country. He would always be at his post—always on the watch-tower, to defend and guard the interests of his constituents.

A burst of applause followed this announcement ; and when silence was in some degree restored, the descendant of Hugo De Lyne continued his speech.

He said he would pass no eulogium on the character of the honorable Baronet, but he would take the liberty of saying a few words expressive of the high esteem in which he deserved to be held. The few words occupied about twenty minutes, and were combined into an encomium of so transcendant a nature, that the Baronet's most ardent supporters began to be ashamed of being supposed to assent to such barefaced untruths. So long as he dealt in generals, it was well enough, but when he proceeded to particularize virtues, such as benevolence, generosity, &c. and talked of the widow's tears

being dried, and the orphan's dejection changed into the smile of gladness by his philanthropy, the perception of the ridiculous got the better of even party feeling for the moment; and a general laugh from friends and foes, rang through the Court House, and continued without intermission during a very patriotic flourish, with which he concluded.

But the laugh of good humour was quickly changed into a tremendous yell of exultation, when Mr. Medlicott Grimsley intimated his intention of addressing the assembly. He was a perfect contrast to the last speaker in every particular—His brow being lowering and heavy, his voice loud and discordant, and his person and habiliments bearing every indication of a great scarcity of soap and water.

“Every body here,” he began, “knows I am a Protestant; and every body, too, knows, I hope, that I don’t care a straw for any man’s religion.—I wish there was no such thing in the world.”

This wish was responded to by a shout of approbation, which as he continued to speak without noticing the interruption, deprived the meeting of the edification to be derived from half a dozen sentences of the same nature poured out

with the most rapid volubility. When however he could be heard, his subject had changed from religion to the Bindons, on whom he heaped unmeasured abuse. Next he abused the Ambrosses, then the Priors, then the Established Church, then its ministers, tithes, &c. till having exhausted all his stock of abuse, together with his voice, he somewhat abruptly concluded by proposing Thaddeus O'Sullivan Gaffrey, Esq.

The time had now come for the candidates to speak for themselves, and Mr. Ambrosse came forward. Under the most favourable circumstances, and with all appliances to boot, he was never known to weary his hearers, by any lengthy display of oratory, but his speech on this occasion was much shorter than any he had ever made during the dozen times that he had before stood the poll ; but whether in matter it equalled or fell short of former times, there was no possibility of judging, as not one word could be heard above the din and uproar, even by the most attentive listeners.

Captain Bindon, who was next in order, rose with the air of a man determined to make a good speech ; but his reception was, if possible, more ungracious than that afforded to his colleague. Besides the groans and hisses that assailed Mr.

Ambrosse, sundry allusions derogatory to the honor of his family, met his unwilling ear. The eccentricities, or foibles, or vices of all the Bindons, male or female, for many generations, were either sportively alluded to, or made matter for bitter reproach ; and though he alternately smiled and looked grave ; now folded his arms in dignified composure, then extended them with appealing gesture ; at one time cast his eyes meekly on the ground, at the next moment glanced sternly at the roof, yet no exhibition of dignity or playfulness, of meekness or displeasure, could gain him a hearing. Even the High Sheriff's beseeching or commanding interposition was set at nought. He indeed was cheered, but the honorable Captain only fared the worse for his interference. One continuous roar greeted him whenever his lips were seen to move, and he at last sat down by his friend, Mr. Prior, looking the very essence of indignant resignation.

The popular candidate, Thaddeus O'Sullivan Gaffrey, Esq., was received on his rising with loud demonstrations of good will ; but the acclamations were not simultaneous ; they were evidently got up more from civility, than enthusiasm ; and had not one or two priests exerted their lungs most vociferously, as an example to

the mob, the cheers would have soon died away in gentle murmurs. In fact, there was no cordiality felt towards him by the peasantry. His genealogy had travelled before him, and they were heartily ashamed of it. Notwithstanding all the means that had been used to prejudice them against the gentry, and unfortunately, with too much success in numerous instances, yet the general feeling was still in favour of a *real* gentleman. "For," as Mrs. Kenawly judiciously remarked to a neighbour, "A gentleman is a gentleman for all that. Besides," she added, "If, for the sake of our religion, and the honor of Ireland, we had to put up with one of his sort, wasn't itasy to find a parliament man among ourselves at home, without hunting in strange places for unsignified rubbish."

But, prejudices apart, Mr. Gaffrey was much above par, when compared with some aspirants to public favour, who sprung up about that time. He looked as like a gentleman as superfine cloth, embroidered satin, gold studs, and a tiny watch could accomplish. Neither did he betray, by his conduct during the contest anything that could be fairly called ungentlemanlike, as contrasted with the doings of his opponents, to whom it might naturally be expected, he would look up

to as models of imitation. His speech at the hustings was also very appropriate, and elicited loud and repeated plaudits from his auditory. We shall not report it either in whole, or in part; we must content ourselves with saying that it was very Irish, and consequently very eloquent, and that the word *talented* occurred in it nine times.

In due course, a shew of hands was called for, and Sir Andrew Shrivel and Mr. Gaffrey declared the successful candidates. The opposite party then demanded a poll, and the usual forms being gone through, the business was adjourned to the following morning.

Then, indeed, the contest began in earnest. Then commenced the tug of war—war, if not to the knife—to almost every other weapon. The street, as on the preceding day, was crowded by an infuriated rabble, ripe for mischief, and so eager for battle, that when an opponent from the enemy's rank did not offer for any length of time, they were ready to fight with each other to keep their spirits from flagging. The Protestants, and the few Romish freeholders who presumed to vote with their landlords, either slunk individually into the town by the most private ways, or marched in a body so numerous

T

and so well prepared for battle, that they were suffered to pass without more injury than some hundreds of tongues could inflict upon them. Now and then, indeed, a fool hardy fellow who calculated upon his popularity, or a swaggering air of unconcern, would venture to brave the danger, but he was soon glad to hide his often not-diminished head in the first friendly asylum he could reach. Many were severely beaten, and many murders would have been committed but for the numbers generally employed in attacking the unfortunate offender. For, when a man was fairly knocked down, instead of allowing one or two to batter him systematically, half a hundred would volunteer their pell-mell assistance, and thus become so densely wedged together, that they had no room to strike, and the police or some other aid generally came time enough to rescue him alive from their hands. While passing from the tally-room to the polling booths, several freeholders were torn by main force from their landlords or agents, and compelled under the withering scowl of the priests, who crowded the booths, to vote contrary to their solemn engagements. In some of those cases, there is no doubt that the compulsion was submitted to with unrepining resig-

nation—perhaps with the full consent of their own secret inclinations—but there were instances where every feeling of the heart revolted against the exaction, and nothing but the fear of threatened vengeance—vengeance, which they well knew seldom failed to overtake the culprit— influenced them to a breach of contract. But one man ventured to resist to a certain extent this species of tyranny. He was tenant to Mr. Ambrosse, strongly attached to him from long experience of much kindness, and who had heretofore firmly refused to support his opponents, and as he was known to be a marked man on that account, every precaution was taken for his safety, and he was not permitted to leave his lodgings till the very moment that his presence was required in public. But he had scarcely crossed the threshold when he was pounced upon by a gang of ruffians, who had been watching his motions since his arrival, and dragged into one of the houses of entertainment engaged by Sir Andrew Shrivel. A considerable time elapsed before he again appeared, when he was conducted with some others, under a strong escort of bludgeoned street-agents, to the court-house. On being asked who he voted for, to the surprise and dismay of his guardians, he de-

liberately answered that he would not vote at all.

“Not vote at all! What brought you here?” was demanded.

“I didn’t come with my own consent,” he replied. “If I had a will of my own, it isn’t here I would be standing now.”

“What do you mean by having a will of your own? Who controuls your will?”

“My own cowardly heart that failed me awhile back; only it shan’t get the better of me all out. No,” he continued, raising his voice, and looking steadily at a green spectacled priest, in a long blue cloak, who had taken his stand directly opposite to him, “Come what will, I won’t shew unnatural ingratitude. The gentleman I live under was ever tender to me and mine—God bless him, late and early!—and if I darn’t do him good, I will never do him harm—no—never—So I won’t vote at all, and I am ready to take the consequence.”

Something like a murmur of approbation ran through the booth, as he made his way to the door; and though the intelligence of his obstinacy was quickly conveyed to the mob in the street, yet no insult was offered, and he was permitted to return home unmolested.

During this and the following day the polling on either side was pretty equal, but on the morning of the third, some most unexpected disappointments threw a chill over the spirits of the Conservatives. Mr. Addenly gave a split vote, and his one Protestant tenant followed his example. The Dean of —— died suddenly, which had such an effect upon an influential clergyman, that nothing but instantaneous change of air to Dublin, and the recreation of a levee at the Castle, could preserve his health, and two or three of his parishioners were afraid to put their lives in danger while he was absent. Mr. Crosscutt fairly ratted at once, carrying off with him his brother-in-law, his brother's brothers-in-law, and his aunt's son-in-law ; and woes of the same kind trode upon one another so quickly, that at twelve o'clock Sir Andrew Shrivel had a majority of twenty seven, and Mr. Gaffrey of eighteen.

This was very bad, and a consultation of all the wise heads was immediately held in Captain Bindon's committee room, and the state of their forces yet to be brought into the field, minutely inquired into. The result of the examination was hopeful, at least sufficiently so as to preclude any thing like despair. There was a

tolerable number of sure votes still in reserve ; besides it was hoped that some sulky, huff-taking gentry, who stood aloof for the present, would step forward to the rescue on the first intimation of real danger. But no time was to be lost in mere deliberation. Every engine for increased activity was immediately put in motion. Messengers on foot, on horseback, or in hack chaises, were despatched in all directions. Arthur Knight was sent to the neighbourhood of Oran-ard, to persuade some people to stay at home ; James Prior undertook to persuade others to come out ; and Sir Manby Rutherford, who professed hating trouble of any kind, caught the contagion, and galloped seventeen miles to manage a demurrer, who, it was guessed, could only be decided by the advances of a person something above the rank of a mere private gentleman.

There was no occasion to exhort Sylvester Fogarth to increased exertion, for he never flagged for one moment. Morning, noon, and night he was at his post, and earned well-deserved praise, both from friends and foes for his activity and zeal. Even Mr. Prior was obliged to confess that his services were invaluable, and that he was a clever fellow. Indeed,

where cleverness had fair play, he was more than a match for the cleverest. Nothing escaped his vigilance. There was no unguarded point in the enemy's quarters, that was not immediately stormed; and he often gained an advantage over them, even where their position seemed impregnable. But he was at times doomed to meet with disappointment where he least expected it. The defection of the Lanigans was particularly unfortunate. Had they stood their ground firmly, their example would have encouraged others to opposition, who now quietly yielded without a struggle. He had also another source of uneasiness in the obstinacy of Simon Dillon, whom no entreaties could induce to go to the poll, in an early stage of the proceedings, which on many accounts was desirable; first, because it would have put the sincerity of his intentions out of all doubt; and next, because his example was likely to have more imitators than even that of the Lanigans. It was, however, useless to argue with him. He would not be dictated to. He was deaf to expostulation, and in the end, began to take a malicious pleasure in the anxiety of his friend, who he knew had appropriated to himself all the credit of his hostility to the popular cause; and

who must be overwhelmed with shame and confusion, if he disappointed him at last—the very event which Fogarth really dreaded, and with good reason ; for as he had not the most favourable opinion of the integrity of human nature, under any shape whatsoever, when self interest, and honor or honesty looked different ways, it could not be supposed that he should make an exception in favour of one who never pretended to be influenced by any principle, but simple, undisguised self-interest.

In this particular instance, however, his fears were groundless. Dillon was in earnest, and when he said that he only waited till he could bring *all* the Ardcarnacarrighy tenantry with him, he meant what he said. He wished to do the thing handsomely—that is—to vex the priests by a grand display of his success on the Conservative side, against the many obstacles that lay in his way ; for, as Fogarth boasted of *his* powers of persuasion in gaining *him* over, so he vaunted on all occasions, *his* more valuable acquisition of Miss Dickinson, whose unnatural desertion of her cousin, Sir Andrew Shrivel, was entirely to be attributed, as he averred, to his interference. He had promised that lady to induce her other Popish tenant, Owen Cuffe,

by some peculiar arguments of his own, to give his vote according to her wishes, and it was the non-appearance of the said Cuffe from day to day, contrary to his express promise, that caused the delay on his part. The first day he was sick, the next, his horse lost a shoe, but on the third, just as a reinforcement was most needed, he was brought in by a special messenger, who carried a letter to him from Dillon, reminding him of some interesting circumstances which it would not be quite prudent to forget.

Some delay occurred in finding the Lloyd's, who had been detained in the town from the commencement of the election, by Dillon's obstinacy in refusing to vote at all, unless he headed all Miss Dickinson's tenants to the poll. They were forthcoming in a short time, and the elder Mr. Gregan, to whose safe keeping Cuffe had been committed during the search for the Lloyd's, was desired to produce his prisoner. But to the utter dismay of Fogarth and his friends, Cuffe was missing, and no traces of his retreat could be discovered. He had been locked up alone in an upper room, and the key lodged safely in the game keeper's pocket, and his escape could only be accounted for by supposing that a ladder had been placed at a window in the

rear of the house, by which he effected his release from durance. Dillon stormed, and threatened vengeance against the run-away: Fogarth stormed, and threatened Gregan with nothing short of utter destruction, who, in turn, laid the blame upon Sylvester himself, for giving him six things to do at once. It was foolish, however, to waste more precious time in vain recriminations, and Dillon, more than ever exasperated against the priests, was impatient to give the most public proof of his contempt and disregard for them. Accordingly, he took the two Lloyd's by the arm, in order to give the idea that they were entirely under his controul, and instead of avoiding observation, as most on the Conservative side thought it prudent to do, courted it by every means in his power.

Curses both deep and loud, and groans, and every other description of ill-will were heaped thick upon him, on his way to and from the polling booth; but he heartily enjoyed his unpopularity, and shewed so bold a bearing, that though many a clenched fist was quivering with nervous impatience to come into contact with his head, yet he passed slowly through the crowd unharmed, speaking now and then with jibing jocularity to his acquaintances among the mob. One man in

particular, who seemed by no means willing to acknowledge former intimacy, was favoured with more than a passing salutation.

“ Tom,” he said stopping, and taking hold of him by the button, “ I know you are breaking your heart with the way that that villian, Ody Cuffe, tricked us all ; and that you won’t know how to face the mistress, when you have so poor a story to tell of one of her underlings : but, don’t lose heart, man, entirely. Give her my duty, and tell her that I will make up the loss to her, and add more nor she counts on to the number. It is a sacret, Tom,” raising his voice to a loud pitch, “ That is only to be between you and me, so don’t let it go farther, but I never was in earnest till now. I am going a short piece off in the course of an hour, to have a little chat with a few dacent, stupid men, that wont gainsay my bidding ; and Tom, my boy ! it’s you, I know will be glad, when you see me come back to the town by eleven to-morrow, with a little lock of friends to give Sir Andrew and Thady the gander a help down the ladder.”

“ Well,” said a man, looking after him, as he entered the principal Inn. “ Simon Dillon, after all, is an honest fellow. See how bould he is. Sorrah take me, if I don’t like a man

that stands his ground like a man, and tells his mind like a trooper."

I suppose them he manes is the tenants on Ballyscrangan," said another. "They are the one family with himself, and not a man of them could be flattered in yet, after all the trouble Father Coyne took with them, though he was twice-a-day there since the polling began."

"Boys," asked Mullaheran—"Would it be a sin to brain that thrator, before, maybe, he ruins the world?"

"Sin," exclaimed a third. "No. But it would be the best turn ever was done for the country. If one of his sort is let to ride the roads in quietness, we may throw our cap at the County."

"To my certain knowledge, he has four pistols in his company this very minute," said a new speaker, with a significant nod of the head.

"To my certain knowledge, Mike O'Donnell," answered Tom, "You are a coward and a snake. Walk off yourself straight, and keep your tongue in your jaw, or I'll souse you in the kennel. Now boys!" he continued, addressing himself particularly to three or four by name—"Wait here for me, till I come back. I must try and

get a private word with Dixie Gregan, and I won't be long away."

"Stop a bit," said the man, who expressed such liberal opinions as to sin. "If Dixie has to meddle in any business, I wash my hands of it.—A fellow, who in spite of all his palaver is working might and main again us, and by all accounts is an informer into the bargain."

"You are out there," replied Tom. "His living, and his father's living, depends on his policy; and he is of more use to us where he is, nor if he openly took our part. How would Mr. Thrashogue know their schemes, if he did not send him notice? How could poor Ody Cuffe have got loose, if he hadn't helped him off? The lad is staunch—there is no black drop in him—so don't stir till you see me again; for if any thing is to be done, there is not a minute for dallying."

## CHAPTER XIV.

SINCE the eventful evening on which Teresa's secret had been divulged, Miss Dickinson maintained a very unusual deportment towards all her household. In her intercourse with her cousin, she was civil to the extreme of punctilio-  
ness, but cold, dignified, and uncommunicative; and her visits to the kitchen were short, and unproductive of the little confidential gossiping, which had heretofore made them very agreeable to herself and her domestics: she now spent much time alone, and repressed all attempts at intrusion from Abby, by a general direction that she was not to be disturbed on any account, except by a visit from Mr. Barrymore, when she chose to retire to the privacy of her sleeping apartment. She was roused to something like her former self on the first day of the election, by the humble petition of Tom Mullaheran, to be permitted to join a few quiet neighbours, who were going to partake of the gaieties, which such

an event usually afforded ; promising to return the same evening, or, at farthest, early the next morning. The petition was graciously granted, with sundry recommendations to keep his distance with foolish people—on no account to be too innocent—to take care of his new hat—and, above all, not to meddle with fighting—for, she assured him how she once knew a very decent man, who had his eye sewed up with a blow of a stick, and that he never looked the same afterwards.

Emboldened by these favourable symptoms, Abby ventured to introduce another topic of conversation, on her own responsibility, which met with bland encouragement ; and the mistress and maid chatted together so comfortably for the space of an hour, that, at the end of it, when Miss Dickinson adjourned to the parlour, where Teresa was sitting at work, her inclination to loquacity had not subsided. She began by admiring the pattern which Miss Hamilton was tracing on muslin, which led to various judicious remarks from both ladies, on the comparative merits of different kinds of muslin, which, in turn, very naturally led to Queen Elizabeth's ruff, and Mary of Scotland's cap, till in the space of another hour, all remainder of constraint gradually disappeared from their intercourse, as

if Derryfane were nothing but the baseless fabric of a vision.

It was perhaps, fortunate for Teresa, that there was such a constant recurrence of interesting circumstances that Miss Dickinson had no leisure to collect her thoughts upon any subject not immediately forced upon her consideration. So many people passed through Oranard, on their way to and from the election, that *that* part of its population which was unwillingly obliged to stay at home, had at least the consolation of hearing in the shortest possible time, every event of importance connected with it. It is true, that the accounts were not always to be depended upon. The most trust-worthy reporters, varied at times so much in their versions of the same story, that it was impossible for the clearest head to form any tolerable guess at the truth. What was averred on the positive eyesight of one witness, was peremptorily contradicted by the evidence of another pair of eyes, equally capable of seeing all that came within the range of vision. Sir Andrew Shrivel was at one time, hundreds a head of all the other competitors—five minutes after, he had retired in despair from the contest. Captain Bindon, according to Davy Black, was carrying all before

him—flatly denied by Sam White, who placed Mr. Gaffrey far in the ascendant. Then, rumours of frightful accidents, or desperate affrays were plentifully circulated. Persons were murdered or destroyed, or *literally* killed, who soon after made their appearance in perfect preservation, and, Mr. Barrymore's carriage, whose fate Miss Dickinson deplored with real tears—it having been smashed into a thousand pieces—drove unscratched through the village, while the gossoon, whose brother *saw it all*, was still regaling Mrs. Sessnan with the particulars.

Tom's continued absence, contrary to his promise of taking but one day's amusement, began at length to give his mistress more lasting uneasiness than any of the casualties, true or false, that had hitherto reached her ears. She was sure some accident must have befallen him, being in general, so punctual, and never given to mitching. Abby tried to comfort her, by reminding her, that though he was as punctual a boy as any in Ireland, yet that he had a knack of always staying beyond his time, when he could not help it, which, no doubt, was the case then; and Teresa, after hazarding one or two surmises as to the probable cause or causes of his protracted stay, endeavoured to turn her

thoughts into another channel, by begging to be particularly informed as to the exact degree of relationship then subsisting between the Shrivels and the Dickinsons.

She completely gained her point. The old lady began her reminiscences soon after dinner, and the evening had considerably advanced before the interesting and intricate subject was exhausted. It was, however, at last so thoroughly and lucidly explained, that no reasonable question remained to be asked ; and Teresa was again puzzling her brains for another fruitful topic, wherewith to while away the remainder of the evening, when a smart double knock at the hall-door, announced a visitor ; and before either of the ladies could audibly express their wonder at who it might be, Mr. Arthur Knight entered the room.

Miss Hamilton immediately grew pale, and looked as if she was petrified. Miss Dickinson, on the contrary, grew red, and looked as if she was ossified ; for when she rose from her chair, to return his respectful salutation, every muscle seemed to acquire a rigidity that no common means were likely ever to relax. But there was nothing rude or uncourteous in her manner. There was only a superabundance of stateliness

in her air, as she pointed, or rather waved her hand to a chair, and begged him to be seated. The gentleman, who had seen her but once before, was not aware that he was received with less cordiality than she usually bestowed upon so slight an acquaintance. He was therefore unembarrassed by any suspicion that he was peculiarly unwelcome, and began to account for so untimely a visit, in a manner, that if adopted by almost any other person in the world, she would have pronounced to be very genteel, very proper, and altogether just what it ought to be.

“ Mr. Prior,” he said, “ Had in his presence reminded Captain Bindon and Mr. Ambrosse of the obligations they were under to her for the very efficient support afforded them by her tenants; and that both those gentlemen had requested him on the very first opportunity to return their thanks, and express their grateful acknowledgments of her good offices.”

Miss Dickinson bowed and said, “ She never doubted but that gentlemen like Mr. Prior and Captain Bindon, and Mr. Ambrosse, would always say what was becoming their station; and that she had no objection to say so behind their backs, as, if called upon, she would not be ashamed to say the same before their faces.”

“ I was sorry,” he went on to say, “ That I was prevented by electioneering business from making earlier personal inquiries after the very unpleasant accident you met with on your way to Prior Abbey; but I was glad to hear from my brother, that you did not suffer from it.”

“ Sir, I should be sorry that you took any trouble on my account, late or early; and you may trust my word for it, that if I was to suffer ever so much, I would own to my dying hour, that I am obliged to you and your brother for the use of your jaunting car, when my own was backed into the ditch.”

“ The obligation was not very great,” he answered, smiling amicably, “ And we were more than repaid by the favor you conferred upon us, in permitting us to be of service to you.” Then turning to Teresa, who, for the last few minutes had been plying her needle with more diligence than skill—“ And you, Miss Hamilton, I hope”—

“ Thank you. Yes, indeed,” replied the young lady, without permitting him to finish the sentence, and then stopped short, looking as foolish as sensible people generally do, or ought to do, when surprised into speaking nonsense.

“ What’s in the wind now,” thought Arthur

to himself, but still unsuspicuous of the real state of affairs, he continued his efforts to make himself agreeable, by volunteering a very confidential communication.

“ You will be sorry to hear, Miss Dickinson, that our prospects are gloomy enough. Within the last hour, I have received a note from Mr. Ambrosse, containing very bad news. In fact, the County is lost to us for this time, unless we succeed by petition.”

Miss Dickinson to whom the word petition conveyed no idea but that of a letter begging for the smallest relief, could not conceive the possibility of gentlemen of rank and fortune ever condescending to such meanness, if they lost all the Counties in Ireland forty times over ; but she was not in the humor of asking explanations, particularly from one of *that* family, she therefore fixed upon the word “ prospects,” as the point to which she was to speak, and answered very decidedly that “ Prospects were always gloomy in bad weather ; and that for her part, she was not one to fault what she could not mend.”

“ But, my dear Madam, I am sure you will agree with me, that it is very provoking to be beaten by such a pair. That Gaffrey is a mere man of straw, and, as for Sir Andrew, the

priests themselves are beginning to be ashamed of him."

"Sir Andrew, Sir," said Miss Dickinson, stammering with ill-concealed indignation, "Sir Andrew, Sir,—Sir Andrew is a gentleman not to be named in company either with straw or priests. His family is an ancient family, and his place is an ancient place, and the handsomest place in the county."

"The house is an old one, certainly," apologized Mr. Knight, aware that he had got into a scrape without seeing his way clearly out of it; "And there are some fine old trees. But I wonder he does not plant out that ugly bog of Cloontimulligan. Bogs, though very good things in their way, are not at all picturesque, and ought always to be planted out."

We do not like using so romantic a word as "agony," to express a young lady's feelings under a discussion upon bogs, but we can employ no other term that could so well describe Teresa's state of mind, as Mr. Knight thus plunged deeper and deeper into what would be, literally, a slough of despond to all her hopes. Miss Dickinson's thoughts, she well knew, had by this time travelled to Ardearnacarrighy, and were ranging over the wide expanse of Dun-

Alt, upon which the Knights of Derryfane, from time immemorial, were supposed to have fixed a covetous eye ; and which, it was evident, they now considered themselves sure of, by the open avowal of one of the family ; for, in no better light could the attack upon the bog of Cloontimulligan be regarded. She was, therefore, prepared for the part Miss Dickinson would act on such provocation ; and was not surprised when she slowly rose from her chair, and made a low curtsy to her visitor, preparatory to leaving the room. But, the next moment, she was greatly surprised to see her sit down again with the most undignified precipitancy ; and, the minute after, her surprise increased sevenfold, on discovering the cause of this sudden change of mind and posture, which was nothing less than the apparition of Naty Foody, the self-exiled turf-boy. He advanced no farther than the door way, but stood there, stock-still, pale as death, with his mouth wide open, his eyes wide open, and every limb quivering with terror.

“ What—what—what’s the matter with the boy ? ” exclaimed the old lady, as soon as she could recover the power of articulation. “ Tell me, Naty, I insist upon it, what makes you so frightful and unmannerly ? ”

An increased extension of mouth and eyes, with a hollow gurgling in the throat was the only answer returned by Naty ; and Miss Dickinson, now under the impression that he was bit by a mad dog, and would assuredly bite her in return, was earnestly imploring Arthur Knight to defend her from his attacks, when Abby Sessnan, pushing him out of her way, rushed into the room, and announced the fearful intelligence, that Simon Dillon was found murdered on the road, within a mile of Oranard ; and that his corpse was that moment carried into his sister's house, at the other end of the village.

Arthur, without waiting for a formal leave-taking, immediately ran into the street, and followed by Naty Foody, soon reached the cottage, in which Margaret Dillon had found an asylum with her aunt, when her father's door was closed against her. It was already crowded by as many of the inhabitants of Oranard, as could gain an entrance ; and it was with extreme difficulty that after much scolding and pushing, he made his way into the room, where Margaret, in a state bordering on frenzy, was shrieking over her father's mangled body, and repelling with violence, every attempt on the part of the bystanders to approach it. She was at length,

more by strength of arm, than persuasion, removed to a short distance from the bed on which it was laid ; and Arthur proceeded to examine the wounds, which presented a hideous spectacle. It would appear that a blow on the head from a stone, or heavy bludgeon, had knocked him off his horse, and that while on the ground, the most ruthless butchery had been practised on his person. Life was, however, not yet extinct. There was still a feeble pulsation of the heart, and Mr. Knight immediately resorted to the use of the common expedients for restoring animation. They soon began to have a perceptible effect. His breathing, which returned fitful and panting at first, in a short time heaved his chest with less irregular motion ; and though his eyes still remained closed, and he was unable to speak, it was evident that he was conscious of what was passing around him.

“ We can do no more, till the surgeon comes,” said Arthur to a man who was recommending some prescriptions of his own. “ We must now endeavour to procure the attendance of a magistrate to receive his depositions, when he recovers the use of his speech.”

“ You think he will recover then ?” said Margaret hastily coming forward, and endeavouring again to force her way towards the bed.

“Pray, be calm!” he said, gently detaining her. “We can form no opinion till a surgeon has examined his wounds. I only mean that he has so far recovered from the senseless state in which I first saw him, that he understands, at least in some degree, what is said.—At this moment, I can perceive that he has recognized your voice.”

“Let me go, Sir,” she cried, extricating herself from his hold, and darting past him. “I have no time to lose. Nature will come back in such an hour as this.” Then, throwing herself on her knees at the side of the bed, she cried with a bitter, though subdued voice,

“Father!—Dear, dear father!—It is your child—your own and only child, that is speaking to you now—won’t you forgive my one fault that I am sorry for?—won’t you give me your blessing?—won’t you look kind at me once again?”

The appeal was not made in vain. The feelings of a parent did return. The poor, disabled object, made many, and for some time, ineffectual struggles to give her some token of reconciliation, while she, in breathless suspense, bent her ear towards his lips, to catch the sound that seemed ready to issue from them. But pain and weakness deprived him of the power of speaking, and she was again almost reduced to

despair, when his eyes slowly unclosed, and rested upon her with a look of tenderness, and the hand which was feebly extended towards her, was delightedly clasped in her's, and pressed to her lips with thanks and blessings.

Arthur Knight, who was deeply affected at this scene, again interfered, and intreated her to retire, or at least, to repress those strong feelings, which might materially injure her father in his present exhausted state. She immediately rose from her knees.

“ You act the part of a friend, Sir,” she said, “ And I will give you no more trouble—for I am now happy. Yes,” clasping her hands, and looking upwards—“ With a thankful, joyful heart, I say, I *am* happy—so happy, that whatever may be laid out for me in this world, I never can be miserably unhappy again.”

The efforts made by Dillon to speak and move, were followed by a total prostration of strength. He relapsed into a state of insensibility, and lay with scarcely any signs of life. Arthur's medical skill was again required; and as he had on the first symptoms of revival, despatched two or three of his most active assistants on different errands, he now found it necessary to summon fresh aid from the kitchen,—and “ Some strong

man"—“Some man that had sense”—“Any man,”—was loudly called for by half-a-dozen voices at once.

“What’s the matter with you, Tom Mullaheran?” angrily asked a woman, “That you don’t run, when you hear the gentleman calling for some one to help him. If you came to hear news for Miss Fiddy, won’t you be better able to satisfy her when you see all?”

Mullaheran was quickly pushed into the room, strongly protesting against such unnecessary rudeness, as nobody was more ready to help poor Mr. Dillon than himself. But he had scarcely uttered a sentence, when the wounded man suddenly sat upright in the bed, his eyes glaring fiercely, and his clenched hands stretched out in the direction of the speaker. The excitement was but momentary, and, as might be expected, fatal. He fell back upon the pillow, and expired.

“Man!” said Arthur Knight, looking sternly at Mullaheran, and laying his hand on his shoulder, “You are his murderer.”

“He is,” shrieked a discordant voice from a corner; and the turf-boy, looking even more ghastly than when he presented himself before his mistress, shuffled into the middle of the room.

“What’s that you dar say to my miscredit?

you stuttering, crazy elf!" furiously asked Mullaheran, menacing him at the same time with his closed fist.

"Tom," cried the other, staring wildly at him. "It is better to confess at once. There is no use in denying it. It is the great God himself has told upon you; for nobody but he and myself was looking on, barring them that helped you."

The murderer, for such he really was, lost all command of himself, at this home accusation. He rushed towards the door to make his escape, but was quickly secured by Arthur Knight, and after many hard struggles to regain his liberty, was lodged in the police barrack; and instead of returning to the house, which was now more than ever a house of mourning, and where his presence was neither necessary, nor desirable, he proceeded up the street, and again knocked at Miss Dickinson's door.

His visit, which, two hours before, was as unwelcome as any visit could be, was now hailed by the poor old lady as a relief from some unseen, and imminent danger, which she felt assured was hanging over her. In fact, she was bewildered with grief and consternation. Dillon's untimely death had greatly affected her. He was an old

acquaintance, for whom she had that kind of regard, which one sometimes feels for a person, who has no other claim to it than merely old acquaintanceship. But, the shock experienced by the detection of Tom's guilt, nearly deprived her of reason. For him she felt heart-seated friendship—the well-earned reward of his supposed-faithful services for many years. To his integrity she had committed the management of her property; and to his humanity she would have trusted the lives of all the human race. On the discovery, therefore, of his worthlessness—of his cruelty to one of her friends—a man, for whom he always expressed the greatest regard, she could not divest herself of a feeling of terror, lest her own life might be in danger from his machinations,—and as Abby had, on the first rumour of his imprisonment, ran off to the police barrack, leaving the house totally unprotected, the presence of a tall, athletic, young man was the most welcome event that could have occurred at such a juncture.

That he was one of the Knights of Derryfane was not the slightest draw-back to her comfort. If she remembered the circumstance at all, it was accompanied by the consolatory reflection, that the family failing was only envy or covetous-

ness. In every other respect, she had, even in former times, been ready to confess, that their character was unimpeached; and that many people went so far as to say—only she could not positively aver it for fact, never having had any acquaintance with them—that they had a name for goodnature. In the instance of the young gentleman, now in question, that fact was proved beyond doubt. Whatever inducement might have at first led him to seek her acquaintance, real, sterling good nature now prompted him to give her all his attention, and more than half his thoughts, when he found her dejected and unhappy. To her disjointed stories about any thing and every thing, he lent, if not a willing, yet a ready ear, and patiently listened to her lamentations over “That ill-advised boy,” or the “Misfortune of that punctual, well-spoken, proper man;” diversified by her apprehensions, that “All was not over yet;” that “Naty Foody might walk in any minute, more terrible than ever;” and that “Stone walls, and strong doors might be no protection against the evil-minded and blood thirsty.”

To reason with her was out of the question, so he did not attempt it, but talked boldly of all he could do, and would do to prevent her being

subjected to the smallest annoyance from the most evil-minded person, within as large a circle as her imagination could draw. While he was speaking, she generally found her courage much increased, but it as quickly evaporated, when she commenced one of her long orations : and the night had far advanced, before his assertions, backed by her cousin's intreaties, could prevail on her to retire to rest. Nor perhaps, would their wisest exhortations have succeeded then, had not the infirmities of old age added their irresistible arguments. She gradually became more and more open to conviction, as weariness and sleepiness pressed heavily upon her ; and she, at length, permitted Teresa to lead her to her bed room, after cordially shaking hands with Mr. Knight, and wishing him health and happiness from the bottom of her heart.

## CHAPTER XV.

EARLY on the following morning the remains of the murdered man, attended by his sister, were removed to Ardcarnacarrighy, where every preparation for a wake, becoming a person of his property, had been previously ordered. His daughter was not to follow till some hours after; and Miss Dickinson, in whom age had not blunted the strong feelings of sympathy with the unhappy; or whose own perplexities and distresses, however great, were never pleaded as an excuse for neglecting any office of humanity, pressingly intreated Teresa to call upon the poor girl, before she left the village, as she was sure nobody was better fitted to speak tenderly to the distressed—Who could so well advise her not to grieve more than was natural—and warn her not to wish bad wishes to any one in particular, for fear she might be mistaken?

Miss Hamilton immediately acquiesced, though much against her inclinations. Judging from her

own feelings, she feared that a visit from a perfect stranger, at such a time, could only be regarded as an intrusion, which the best intentions could scarcely excuse. She also knew that Margaret Dillon had expressed a strong dislike to herself personally, on account of some Roman Catholic children, whom she had induced to attend at a Sunday School. Taking, therefore, every thing into consideration, she rather expected, and would not have been very sorry for it, that the proposed interview would be declined. But it was not. She was admitted at once, and received with more than civility.

Margaret Dillon, like the generality of persons of her rank in Ireland, felt no annoyance at being obliged to mourn in a crowd ; or, if she did, must have borne it patiently, as an unavoidable submission to the custom of her country, which, in no case, permits the indulgence of lonely sorrow. The lower orders of the Irish, whose impetuous feelings are seldom under any controul, can never be persuaded as to the reality of the affliction that avoids publicity. Their estimate of the intensity of grief depends on the violence of its outward demonstration ; and they are not slow to suspect hardness of

heart, where that is wanting. On the preceding night she had given sufficient evidence, in that way, of the reality of her sorrow, to satisfy the most excessive demands, but when Teresa saw her, the excitement had entirely passed away. She was calm and collected, and spoke of the late dreadful occurrence with a composure that seemed unnatural. Neither did her manner evince much apparent agitation, as she went on to accuse herself as having mainly contributed to it. Her father, she said, would never have adopted the line of politics that drew down upon him the displeasure of God and man, but for her undutiful conduct. His anger got the better of his judgment ; and to punish her wilfulness, he did *that* in a hurry, which cost him his life.

“ It was all my own doing,” she said, while the tears began to fall fast upon her bosom. “ I do not want to deny it ; but if the hardest penance can atone for it, I will not shrink from it.”

Teresa’s countenance plainly shewed that she sympathized deeply with her affliction, but she could not trust herself to speak. She feared lest any unguarded expression of condolence might appear to countenance the delusion to which she was clinging for consolation ; and

she was equally apprehensive of stating her own opinions, lest she might only give offence, and strengthen prejudices already sufficiently strong.

The cause of her silence was not, however, suspected by Margaret, and as her own heart was full, she was glad to meet a person who would allow her to unburden it freely without the interruption of the moral reflections or wise admonitions, with which her other comforters had harassed her. After a short pause she continued—

“ I had his forgiveness. There can be no doubt of that—and I was so joyful then, that in my foolishness, I defied misfortune ever to cast me down again. But—when it was all over—when I felt what it was to have nothing but desolation in my heart, grief came so powerful upon me, that I forgot every thing, only what was before my eyes. I believe my senses would have gone entirely, had not the people at last gratified my desire of being left alone for a few minutes, when a thought from heaven—for it could be nothing else—then flashed upon my mind, and I obeyed it at once. I made a vow over the poor breathless body, that I would devote the remainder of my days to God, in a

convent ; and from that moment, peace and comfort came back to my mind."

" Alas ! alas !" thought Teresa, " I could direct you to the source of true peace and abiding comfort, if my cowardly heart would permit me." After a moment's hesitation she determined to venture at all hazards ; and as the least offensive way of conveying instruction, gently reminded her, that her life might be devoted to the service of God, without shutting herself up in a convent.

Margaret's countenance instantly fell. She had been so prepossessed by the manner and appearance of her visitor, as quite to forget her heresy, and at once felt inclined to speak unreservedly to her. But on the first allusion to religion, and that evidently aimed at combating an opinion advanced by herself, she became alarmed, and answered hastily,

" Our professions are different, Miss Hamilton. What your's teaches I cannot say, as I know nothing of it. But mine tells me, that if I fall into error, I ought to repent, and make atonement for it."

" So does mine," answered Teresa. " At the same time it bids me look to the great atonement, without which all my repentance would avail nothing."

Margaret smiled contemptuously. "I did not think repentance made any part of your religion, as it can have no use for it. I may be mistaken, but it seems to me to take no offence at sin of any kind. At least, I know it makes light of treachery, and promise-breaking, and false swearing."

"You are mistaken. There are some—too many I fear, professing Protestants, who *do* make light of sin, and who may tempt others to do the same; but *my* religion—the religion of the Bible—gives no sanction to such characters."

"Neither does mine," she answered warmly; "Nor do *our* clergy countenance wickedness of any kind in their flock, though their enemies do not scruple to lay that to their charge. They advise the people to nothing but what is right, and, oh!" wringing her hands bitterly, "If *he* that is gone had followed their advice, I would not now be the poor heart-broken creature I am."

A silence of some minutes ensued, for Teresa had no inclination to engage in a religious controversy, particularly with one, whose irritable feelings were ready to take offence at the slightest dissent from any thing she chose to advance; and she hoped that the conversation would be

suffered quietly to die away, but to her great disappointment, Margaret resumed it with increasing warmth.

“ You will excuse me, Miss Hamilton, if I have a preference to my own religion ; and even if I had any fault to find with it, I could not look to yours to mend it. I never was well acquainted with but one Protestant—a man who was wise enough for this world, though without any thought for another ; and when I sometimes wondered at his carelessness, he would tell me that he had as much religion as any of his profession—that you all believed nothing but what suited your own convenience — and that the greatest Bible-talkers were ridiculed among you as hypocrites and deceivers.”

Teresa still remained silent, hesitating what to answer ; but her embarrassment did not continue long ; for Margaret’s attention was suddenly withdrawn from her to something passing in the outer-room, to which she listened with flushed cheek, and quickened respiration.

“ Oh ! do not leave me alone with him,” she said earnestly to Teresa, who had risen to go away, “ I never intended to have seen him again, but since he forces his company upon me, I am glad to have a witness to what passes be-

tween us." Then, before Miss Hamilton could ask any explanation as to the person, or the nature of the interview, to which her presence was required, she opened the door and said, "Come in, Mr. Fogarth. If you have anything to say to me, I have a few minutes to spare now, and I suppose they will be enough for any business you can have with me."

Sylvester entered, but, on seeing Miss Hamilton, he drew back, apologizing for his intrusion, and offering to call again, when she was quite disengaged.

"I am as much disengaged now," she coldly replied, "As I shall be at any other time, when there could be a chance of our meeting. The presence of this young lady, who keeps me company at my own request, can be no hindrance to your mentioning the business, whatever it may be, that has brought you here."

Fogarth tried to look unembarrassed and sentimental. He said, he had come to offer his services in any way that they could be employed, and to take her directions for the management of the melancholy duties that had devolved upon her.

The answer was short and thankless. She required no services, and had no directions to give.

Her quondam suitor stood his ground unmoved; and assuming the air of one possessing, or at least entitled to possess her confidence, said, "I suppose you will not remain long at Ardcarnacarrighy? You will return here until your affairs are finally adjusted?"

"I cannot understand, Sir," she began, "Why you"—but immediately checking herself, she added, with an altered tone and manner. "If trouble did not confuse my mind, I ought to remember that you, as my father's old acquaintance, have a right to ask questions, which, in another, would be freedom. I can have no objection, therefore, to give you all the information you require as to my future plans. I shall leave Ardcarnacarrighy, the day after to-morrow, and I do not mean to return here again, but, at once, go to the nunnery in Galway, where I intend to take the veil."

Sylvester had great command of countenance, and he meant to look surprised and shocked at this astounding intelligence; but before he had given his features the requisite expression, the shade of a shadow of an incredulous smile rested for the hundred and twentieth part of a second upon his lips, which was instantaneously detected by Margaret, who replied to it promptly.

“ I see you do not believe me, Mr. Fogarth—which is only natural in one like you. Those who seldom speak truth themselves, are apt to suspect the absence of it in all others.”

“ You misunderstand my feelings very much, Miss Dillon. I have the most perfect confidence in your word ; but I must be permitted to hope that you will hesitate before you take a step in a hurry, that you may be sorry for when it is too late.”

“ I am sure you are sincere in that hope,” she answered, sarcastically, “ And it is almost a pity to disappoint you.” Then turning quickly to Teresa, she continued, “ This gentleman, Miss Hamilton, I suppose you know, for it was no secret—when I had the name of a fortune, was willing to join his lot to mine. But perhaps you do *not* know, that when I was disinherited, and put from under my father’s roof, he gave me plainly to understand, that, without the means of buying a welcome, none waited for me in his house. Now, that, I believe, I am rich—how rich, he knows better than I do—he hopes that I may forget his former unkindness, and be flattered into considering him again in the light that I confess I once did. But that is impossible. I have a spirit that cannot brook meanness

and treachery. When I first discovered his baseness, I scorned him in my heart—and I do so still—indeed, if possible, more so than at first."

"Miss Dillon," said Fogarth, with the air of injured innocence, "You accuse me wrongfully. My sentiments towards you never changed; and I must say, that even had there been any appearance of coldness on my part, when injudicious interference could have no other effect than to increase your father's resentment against you—yet as his friend"——

"His enemy, you mean," she said, again giving way to indignation, "You were the worst sight he ever saw. You were the first who encouraged him in disobedience to his guides—you wanted to buy him, and though he refused your offer, I have no doubt, you sold him, and have the price of his blood in your pocket."

"This is too bad!" exclaimed Fogarth, completely losing his temper, "You know that I did not influence your father. I could not do it—you may blame those who made a tool of *you*, for the part he took. If there is any price of blood in question, your adviser, Mr. Gurteen, has handled more of it than ever I shall."

Indignant as Margaret felt before, her anger

was roused ten-fold, when the character of a man whom she venerated with a species of adoration, was thus foully maligned ; she did not, however, undertake his defence, because she could not find words sufficiently strong to express her abhorrence and detestation of so wicked and unfounded an accusation : she merely desired Fogarth to leave her presence, in a tone of such imperious command, that he thought it prudent to obey, without a word of expostulation ; and Teresa, guessing that her company could now be dispensed with, took leave at the same time.

The account of Dillon's murder, which circulated through the country, with the speed of wild-fire, gave a death blow to the hopes of the Conservatives. Such a universal panic seized the peasantry that even the most stout-hearted among them quailed ; and those who had hitherto stood neuter, hastened to avert a similar fate by timely submission. The Ballyscrangan tenantry over whom Dillon was supposed to possess great influence, and which he probably would have exerted to some purpose, had he lived to the end of the election, came in a body at an early hour the next morning to vote, as the priests desired. Many other waverers followed their example ; and before twelve o'clock the popular candi-

dates had a majority, with which it was impossible to compete. In this hopeless state of affairs, when nothing effective could be done, Fogarth's services, heretofore invaluable, were dispensed with for a few hours, that he might look after his own private concerns ; which, unfortunately for him, were but too closely connected with the affairs of the nation. He was fated, as we have seen, to meet with disappointment in his tenderest anticipations, but he had a buoyancy of spirits that made him rise superior to adversity,—and instead of retiring to the solitude of his own lodgings, to chew the cud of better fortune, he galloped back to the scene of contention, plunged again into the bustle of public life, and worked hard to the last moment in his employer's service. The time that intervened between his return and the close of the poll, did not exceed an hour and a half. One booth after another was closed ; and at four o'clock in the afternoon, the whole business was concluded ; Sir Andrew Shrivel and Thaddeus O'Sullivan Gaffrey, Esq., being returned by a majority of ninety-three.

The intelligence quickly reached Oranard, and affected Miss Dickinson almost as strongly as the more tragical events of the preceding day.

She again relapsed into a state of nervous apprehension, that something had occurred, or was about to occur, which would lead to frightful consequences. The fear of personal danger did not indeed harass her on this occasion. Sir Andrew was not merely a relation, he was also a gentleman, and as such, could never be suspected of indulging vulgarly hostile intentions towards any body ; and as she had never seen the man that was called Thady, she could not realize his evil propensities, so as to give her any abiding uneasiness. Nevertheless, her mind became every moment more and more perplexed and confused. No one idea could fix itself in it, so as to be thought over calmly. The prevailing impression was, that she had been the cause of Sir Andrew's success, but whether she was to be glad or sorry for it, was a doubt she could not solve. When she heard Abby's triumphant exultation, she felt greatly disposed to rejoice with her, and when she remarked the grave expression of her cousin's countenance, she thought it incumbent upon her to be sorry.

To relieve herself from this perplexity, she talked incessantly, and indulged in such a rambling vein, that it was impossible to follow her, or even to guess, now and then, at her meaning.

As opportunities offered to put in a word, Teresa endeavoured, by an apt or unapt illustration, as the case might be, to lead her thoughts to some of those historical reminiscences which, in general, carried with them such intense interest as to occupy all her attention. But the attempt was fruitless. All the ancient worthies who were summoned to appear before her, were either totally disregarded, or noticed only as they reminded her of something immediately connected with herself. Thus, Coriolanus put her in mind of her four votes ; and that was all. Cato, Agrippina, and Quintus Curtius, were not thought worthy of a remark, and even Regulus, an inexhaustible subject of wonder and mysterious admiration, was dismissed unceremoniously, when by some extraordinary association of ideas, the mention of his name brought vividly to her recollection the former intimacy between the Shrivels and the Dickinsons. At length, her conversation assumed a character of such wild incoherency that Teresa became alarmed lest she should talk herself into a fever, if not into temporary insanity ; and having in vain besought her to lie down, made some excuse for leaving her alone, in the hope, that when she had nobody to speak to, her mind might rest itself, and

recover something of its usual matter-of-fact tone.

The experiment succeeded. After the lapse of two hours, she found her quiet and composed, and though silent and thoughtful, her manner was unconstrained and natural.

As soon as the tea equipage was removed, Teresa, who feared to introduce any topic, however indifferent, lest it might lead to a recurrence of the former painful scene, offered to read aloud from a new publication, lent, and highly recommended by Mr. Barrymore. The proposal was rejected.

“ Not to-night, if you please, Terasa ; for I have something to say that has long dwelt upon my mind ; and that I never could compass the telling of, till a short time back, when I was sitting here alone, and thoughts came into my mind, that plainly shewed me more of my own heart, than I was willing to find out.” She paused for a moment, and then abruptly asked, “ Don’t you judge pride to be a great sin, Terasa ?”

The expected answer being given, she continued,

“ I am glad to find you understand *that*, Terasa ; for *you* will be in great danger one of these

days, of falling into it. And mind, I warn you to shun it when it tempts you as it did me. For, it is a poor story to have to tell—but it is true—I let pride into my heart, and I welcomed it, and I kep it there, till it brought sore punishment with it, and reduced me very low—more low—I assure you—than any body knows but myself."

Miss Hamilton said a few words kindly and affectionately, which went home to the old lady's heart, and encouraged her to open it fully and freely.

"I believe it was in my nature long ago," she said; "But I never was rightly sure of it till the family estate came into my own possession. Then I first felt it strong in me; nor did I try to keep it down; for I thought it no shame or disgrace to be proud. Besides,—only that is no excuse, I know—every body seemed to expect it from me. I heard of nothing but Ard-carnacarrighy, and I thought of nothing else; and, though—you may believe me—I never, even in my foolishest times, despised any of my fellow-creatures for not being estated people, still I would reflect upon them in my own mind, as not being properly my equals."

"I understand your feelings," said Teresa,

who perceived that some observation was expected from her. "I believe they are natural, though they are not, on that account, the less sinful."

"You say right, Terasa. They are sinful, as I know to my cost. But, as I was saying, I gave myself up to pride entirely. I was proud of my tenants—all responsible, well-doing men. I was proud of my rents every twenty-fifth of March and twenty-ninth of September—I was proud of my prodigal son—I was proud of the old Pigeon-house, like the one at Manby Grange; but, above all, I was proud of them unfortunate four votes, that gave me so much credit in the County. You know yourself, how all the world talked of nothing else. The first gentlemen in Ireland came asking for them—they wrote the civilest letters—and all declared how they looked up to them as their best support. Well, Terasa—though I was sometimes pestered out of my senses, with what one advised, and another advised, still I was proud of them to the very last—I would not have parted with them to be made a queen. And what did they do for me, after all? They were the cause of my poor tenant's untimely end. They put murder into the breast of that foolish boy, whose nature, I

can't help thinking, was not always cruel. They have shut the heart of her, there in the kitchen against me, who for twenty-three years ate my bread in kindness and good will. They have put between me and my blood-relation by the grandmother—she, you know, was Shrivell—without any benefit to them that got them. And, what is more—I give you my word, Terasa, I think they have broke my heart."

"No, no, you must not say so," answered Teresa, tenderly. "If you are conscious of having indulged any sinful dispositions, it is right that you should humble yourself before God, and ask forgiveness. But, as to those votes—which I wish you would think of no more—you acted uprightly and conscientiously in the disposal of them; and you are not answerable for the consequences, lamentable as I acknowledge them to be."

"I could look conscience in the face, if that was all," she answered; "As what else made me give up Sir Andrew? It went very hard with me, I can tell you, to be unnatural to him, till my duty was made plain to me; and then you know there was no help for it. You say I ought to be humbled. And believe me, Terasa, so I am—for I don't want to hide my sin—and

I did ask forgiveness on this very spot, for my wicked pride, while I was alone by myself, without even a book to prompt me."

Miss Dickinson in common with many others, had no objection to confess herself a sinner in the abstract, provided that no particular sin was objected against her. She then, either resolutely denied the imputation, or tacked some quality to it, which exalted it into a positive virtue. On this account, it was not pleasant to enter upon the subject of personal religion with her, except when Mr. Barrymore introduced it. From him she would bear any thing,—as she gave him credit for knowing her better than she did herself, but nobody else was ever permitted to hint at an imperfection in her character, amounting to what she called sin. Teresa was therefore surprised, and pleased at this open avowal, and while she soothed and comforted her, was careful not to weaken the impressions which led her to form a right estimate of herself. Miss Dickinson heard her attentively and with pleasure.

"I give you my word, Teresa," she said, "I could listen to you till to-morrow morning, only I have more on my mind that must be got rid of, before I can be quite comfortable. So

now, will you tell me, what is the name—the Christian name, I mean—of that tall young man that was so civil to us last night, and—as it is only right to confess—once before, on his brother's jaunting car?"

Teresa's pleasurable sensations vanished in a moment, giving place to others of a very opposite nature. Her first impulse was to intreat her kinswoman not to allude to a subject that could only be painful to both; but her second thoughts determined her to answer the question simply and without comment. The fact was accordingly stated, that his name was Arthur.

"And now, can you tell me, Teresa, is Arthur and Atty all one and the same name?"

"I really do not know, Ma'am. They may be, but I cannot say."

Miss Dickinson sat immersed in thought for a few minutes, and when she again spoke it was in soliloquy.

"Atty, Atty Knight," she repeated to herself. "That was the man—his great grandfather—before I was born, as I often heard my poor father say"—she again paused, and looking steadfastly at Miss Hamilton, said in a tone of great seriousness,

"Teresa, I am older than you are. I ought

to know more about the heart than could come within your knowledge, or, I hope, ever may. And remember, I warn you, not to give way to thoughts, for when they once get into the head, there is no banishing them, even when you know they ought to be banished."

Miss Hamilton felt very willing to banish all the thoughts then occupying her head, but as that was impossible, she merely assented to the propriety of the thing in general, and Miss Dickinson proceeded.

"If I did not hate, I went very near it—I confess that—and it seems to me now, all without reason. For if his great grandfather did try to take an advantage of my father, before I was born, was that any excuse for me to keep up bitterness against all of the name for ever after?"

"Certainly not, Ma'am," said Teresa, gathering courage as she spoke; "And even were the injury a personal one, you would not I am sure, excuse yourself for indulging an unforgiving disposition."

"They never injured me, Teresa. On the contrary, whenever it was in their power, they did me good, as I can prove to you, though it may tell to my own discredit. It is a long time ago—when I kep house for my poor brother

Gregory—that I lost my beautiful gold twee-case, in the desk there, out of my pocket, on the road between Ardcarncarrighy and Derryfane. A young girl, one of *that* family found it, and sent it to me with her compliments, guessing that such an article could only belong to me. Well—I could not be uncivil at my worst times; so I sent back my bare compliments, that I was obliged. And would you believe it, Teresa? From that hour to this present moment, I never told who found the twee-case, afraid that tenderness to *them* might come into my mind, whether I would or not!"

Teresa could have smiled, had not the poor old lady been affected even to tears at the recollection of her ingratitude. She soon however, recovered composure to proceed with her confessions.

" That good turn came back fresh to my memory the day we dined at Prior Abbey, when *her* second cousin's children, who might have left us desolate and astray on the public road, took as much care of me, as if I was their own flesh and blood; putting a new cloak under my feet, to keep them from the dust. I thought of it again too, last night, when even he that has the same name with his great grandfather, offered

to protect my life, at the peril of his own, if any one molested me. Still, I did not rightly see my error, till misfortune brought me low. Then I considered, that there was no use in repenting of my pride, bad as it was, if I fostered dislike to a fellow creature, which was not much better; so I repented of that too. And, I give you my word, Terasa, once I forced my stubborn mind to surrender entirely, I grieved more for that, than for the other: so that if one of the Knights of Derryfane, or if all the Knights of Derryfane, were near me at the time, I could have humbled myself with pleasure before them, even supposing they refused to take my submission; which—after all, I don't think they would."

" Assuredly not," answered Teresa, warmly. " Nobody could be so brutal. But, dear Miss Dickinson, putting man entirely out of the question, you have the comfort of knowing, that there is One who will accept it, and who will not upbraid for former offences."

" I hope so, Terasa. I hope *He* will accept it; for I think I give it in earnest and entirely. But now, all I wish to say is this—that as I bear no ill will to any body, I trust none bears ill will to me. Terasa—maybe, I was not always careful enough over my spirit with yourself—but,

if ever I spoke unfeeling to you—if ever I brought a touch of sorrow to the heart of the orphan under my own roof—I am sorry for it, and I ask your pardon."

Teresa burst into tears, and embracing her affectionately, said "Dear, dear madam! Why do you speak thus to me? I have nothing to pardon. You were always kind to me—most kind—you deserve nothing from me but the liveliest, truest, warmest gratitude; and you have it—you have indeed."

Miss Dickinson kissed her. "I am very happy at hearing that," she said, "and I give you my word, Teresa, I am so happy, and have such peace in my mind, that I would rather not talk any more. I will go to bed—Good night, Teresa—please God, when the morning comes, I will say what will satisfy you that I am an altered woman."

The morning came, but it did not please God that Miss Dickinson should see it. When Teresa went to her room, at her usual hour of rising, she found her dead in her bed. Her departure had been apparently without a struggle. Her features retained the same peaceful expression they wore on the preceding night; and it might literally be said in her case, that she fell asleep.

Nothing more remains to be told, except that in about seven months after, the deadly feud between the rival houses of Ardcarnacarrighy and Derryfane was happily extinguished by the union of Arthur Knight and Teresa Hamilton—that the family mansion was repaired in the Elizabethan style for their future residence, and the bog of Dun-alt very judiciously planted out.

As some of our readers may wish to learn the after fortunes of the other individuals who have figured in this story, we subjoin a short sketch of the principal ones up to the present time.

Margaret Dillon did take the veil, contrary to the secretly indulged hope of Mr. Fogarth, that she might relent at last, and not bury her seven thousand pounds in a nunnery. He did not however injure his constitution by unavailing sorrow. He sought consolation, and found it in a match, which if it did not produce so much ready money, offered largely in the way of connexion and family interest.

Mrs. Sessnan retired from servitude, on the death of her old mistress, and keeps a very respectable green grocer's establishment in Oranard.

Tom Mullaheran stood his trial at the next assizes for Dillon's murder, and though Naty

Foody's evidence was positive as to the fact, the jury could not agree, and he was remanded to prison. At his second appearance at the bar, he was more fortunate. The turf-boy, then in the last stage of consumption, broke down, as it is called, in his evidence, and he was acquitted.

Mr. Gregan senior was dismissed from Lord Clanerris's employment for the alleged offence of conniving at the abduction of Ody Cuffe; but he was fully recompensed some months after, for his unmerited disgrace by the appointment of his accomplished son Dixie, to the situation of chief constable of police, which he continues to fill, much to his own credit, and the satisfaction of the community at large.

THE END.

Thomas L. White, Printer, 65, Fleet Street.

W.C. 10







